

Four Kingdom Motifs before and beyond the Book of Daniel

*Edited by Andrew B. Perrin
and Loren T. Stuckenbruck,*

*with the assistance of
Shelby Bennett and Matthew Hama*



Four Kingdom Motifs before and beyond the Book of Daniel

Themes in Biblical Narrative

JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN TRADITIONS

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Abbreviations

In addition to standard abbreviations in *The SBL Handbook of Style: Second Edition*, the volume includes the following for journals, reference volumes, and monograph series.

<i>AeF</i>	<i>Aethiopistische Forschungen</i>
<i>AJH</i>	<i>Acta Juridica Hungarica</i>
<i>AmBR</i>	<i>American Benedictine Review</i>
<i>AnE</i>	<i>Annales d’Ethiopie</i>
<i>AnEM</i>	<i>Anuario de estudios medievales</i>
<i>ArB</i>	<i>Art Bulletin</i>
<i>ASSL</i>	<i>Archiv für das Studium der neueren Sprachen und Literaturen</i>
<i>ASRSP</i>	<i>Archivio della Società romana di storia patria</i>
<i>BB</i>	Bibliothèque de Byzantion
<i>BCAW</i>	Blackwell Companions to the Ancient World
<i>BCCT</i>	Brill’s Companions to the Christian Tradition
<i>BCEMA</i>	<i>Bulletin du centre d’études médiévales d’Auxerre</i>
<i>BGL</i>	Bibliothek der griechischen Literatur
<i>BibAr</i>	Biblia Arabica
<i>BSAW</i>	Berlin Studies of the Ancient World
<i>BZKP</i>	Beiträge zur klassischen Philologie
<i>CCO</i>	<i>Collectanea Christiana Orientalia</i>
<i>CCR</i>	Cambridge Companions to Religion
<i>CCS</i>	Cambridge Classical Studies
<i>CLS</i>	<i>Comparative Literature Studies</i>
<i>CR</i>	<i>Classical Review</i>
<i>CTSRR</i>	College Theology Society Resources in Religion
<i>DAEM</i>	<i>Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters</i>
<i>DOML</i>	Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library
<i>DOS</i>	Dumbarton Oaks Studies
<i>EC</i>	<i>Early Christianity</i>
<i>EMA</i>	<i>Égypte/Monde arabe</i>
<i>EME</i>	<i>Early Medieval Europe</i>
<i>ES</i>	Études syriaques
<i>ETHDT</i>	Études et textes pour l’histoire du dogme de la trinité
<i>GCS.NF</i>	<i>Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten Jahrhunderte: Neue Folge</i>
<i>GSECP</i>	Gorgias Studies in Early Christianity and Patristics
<i>JAJ</i>	<i>Journal of Ancient Judaism</i>

JAJSup	Journal of Ancient Judaism Supplements
<i>JSIJ</i>	<i>Jewish Studies Internet Journal</i>
JSJS	Journal for the Study of Judaism Supplements
LAHR	Late Antique History and Religion
LDSS	The Literature of the Dead Sea Scrolls
<i>MDTC</i>	<i>Materiali e discussioni per l'analisi dei testi classici</i>
<i>MEG</i>	<i>Medioevo Greco: Rivista di storia e filologia bizantina</i>
MF	Mittelalter-Forschungen
MGHSRG	Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum
MIPTS	Mediaeval Iberian Peninsula Texts and Studies
ML	Mediaevalia Lovaniensia
MSCHFM	Millennium Studies in the Culture and History of the First Millennium CE
<i>NGWG</i>	<i>Nachrichten von der königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, philologisch-historische Klasse</i>
NSS	Nuovi Studi Storici
PatMS	Patristic monograph series
<i>PAPS</i>	<i>Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society</i>
<i>PCPS</i>	<i>Proceedings of the Classical Philological Society</i>
<i>PTA</i>	<i>Papyrologische Texte und Abhandlungen</i>
<i>RevRo</i>	<i>Revue roumaine d'histoire</i>
<i>RP</i>	<i>Res publica</i>
<i>RSE</i>	<i>Rassegna di Studi Etiopici</i>
SCRK	Studien zur christlichen Religions und Kulturgeschichte
SHCT	Studies in the History of Christian Traditions
SJSJ	Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism
SS	Scriptores Syri
STAC	Studien Und Texte Zu Antike Und Christentum
<i>THBSup</i>	<i>Supplements to the Textual History of the Bible</i>
<i>TM</i>	<i>Temas Medievales</i>
TSMJ	Texts and Studies in Medieval and Early Modern Judaism
VCSup	Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae
WMBC	Westminster Bible Companion

Introduction to the Four Kingdoms as a Time Bound, Timeless, and Timely Historiographical Mechanism and Literary Motif

Andrew B. Perrin

1 New Directions for a Discussion on Four Kingdoms

This collection of essays is the result of a collaborative project between Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München and Trinity Western University. Our venture began as a small conference in Munich (August 7–8, 2018).¹ The outcomes of our conversations there both answered questions and posed new ones. As such, we extended invitations to a larger group of scholars to include voices that were both international and interdisciplinary. The topic that united all of these contributions was the historiographical mechanism and motif of the four kingdoms.

The four kingdoms schema has enabled writers of various cultures, times, and locations, to periodize all of history as the staged succession of empires barreling towards the consummation of history and arrival of a utopian age. The motif provided order to lived experiences under empire (the present), in view of ancestral traditions and cultural heritage (the past), and inspired outlooks assuring hope, deliverance, and restoration (the future). Research on the historical origins, imperial identifications, history of interpretation, and contemporary applications of the four kingdoms pattern is expansive.² The present project both draws upon and extends these studies on the mechanism's formulation and reformation before, in, and beyond the book of Daniel in three key ways.

First, research on the four kingdoms traditionally adopts a quest for origins approach. That is, pursuing and identifying the earliest expressions of this idea—whether in known external sources or redactional histories of biblical

1 Funding for the event was provided by the Canada Research Chair in Religious Identities of Ancient Judaism at Trinity Western University, the Chair of New Testament Studies at Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München, and the Alexander von Humboldt Stiftung.

2 Given that the four kingdoms pattern cuts across many ancient writings, amassing a comprehensive bibliography is challenging and will inevitably leave something out. For studies representative of the scope of texts, questions, and approaches of four kingdoms research, see the bibliography at the end of this introduction. The bibliographies of individual essays in the volume complete the state of research as it relates to specific collections or periods.

writings—is understood as the interpretive solution to unlocking the overarching meaning of this notion. As seen in the bibliography below, several important studies have revealed that there are discernable ancient historiographical attempts at kingdom counts in both ancient Near Eastern and Hellenistic writings. Examples such as the *Bahman Yasht* (*Zand-i Vohūman Yasn*) and Hesiod's *Works and Days* 1.109–201 are often considered indicators for this foundational point of departure for origins-oriented research. However, regardless of its beginnings, the four kingdoms motif has acquired a remarkably broad reach and diverse reception. Our project aims to balance the important quest for origins with new questions that focus more on the ongoing development of four kingdoms schemas.

Second, due to Daniel's privileged place in the Jewish and Christian canons, this writing became the main channel by which Western intellectual culture and confessional communities received and encountered this type of imperial periodization. It would not be too much to say that it has become synonymous with Danielic tradition. To be sure, examples such as 4 Ezra 12:11 and *Ant.* 10.272–76; 11.337–338 indicate that, from an early time, writers engaged and extended Danielic concepts of empire and time. Yet in the larger lifespan of the four kingdoms motif, it is apparent that the concept is bound neither to Danielic tradition itself nor to a biblical book. It exists not only before the biblical book, as noted above, but is also beyond it. Our project aims to extend the scope of writings and corpora considered in the origins, transmission, and reception of four kingdoms motifs.

Third, studies on the redaction through reception of the motif tend to look at the four kingdoms through the lens of Western cultural memory and media. Whether in materials from antiquity, the mediaeval period, or contemporary movements, the four kingdoms structure fueled the imaginations of creators of any ilk and communities of all traditions. The recent discovery of four beasts imagery and an accompanying Aramaic inscription in a fifth century CE floor mosaic at the synagogue at Huqoq offers evidence for an early cultural appropriation of the concept in visual architecture.³ Closer to our own time, a dangerous interpretation of Danielic historiographies contributed to the apocalyptically-charged ideology of the Branch Davidians.⁴ There are, of

3 The full nature of the discovery with images must await the dig report. In early news releases, Jodi Magness confirmed an image of the second beast of Dan 7:4 as well as a partial Aramaic inscription referring to the first beast. See Amanda Borschel-Dan, "First Artistic Depiction of Little Known Exodus Story Uncovered in Galilee," *The Times of Israel*, 1 July 2019, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/first-artistic-depiction-of-little-known-exodus-story-uncovered-at-huqoq>.

4 For example, the controversial posthumous music release of David Koresh's original songs includes a track titled, "The Book of Daniel." See Steve Hochman, "Is the Pop World Ready for

course, many more expressions of the four kingdoms between these book-ends of beauty and tragedy in Western culture. Yet a Western orientation risks overlooking or ignoring equally numerous non-Western cultural expressions that found or made meaning by drawing on the patterning of world history by a four kingdoms count. The sample pairing here also illustrates the need to engage more than written materials to account for other types of cultural appropriations or redeployments. Our project aims to expand the cultural conversation partners to include overlooked or ignored items relevant to the study of the four kingdoms outside of the West.

2 Volume Overview

No single essay in the volume achieves all of the above aims. Rather, the collection of thirteen essays below demonstrates the importance of interdisciplinary dialogue and collaborative research to both fill current gaps in knowledge and to create new questions around the arc of four kingdoms expressions across cultures, corpora, and chronologies. Our contributors achieve this in the following ways.

Michael Segal (“The Four Kingdoms and Other Chronological Conceptions in the Book of Daniel”) considers five aspects of Daniel’s chronological infrastructure: chronological span, periodization, determinism, geopolitical transformation, and eschatology. In the course of this investigation, Segal advances several key observations related to the compositional-exegetical growth of the tradition. In particular, he notes the symbolic culmination and continuation of empires until their collective destruction in Daniel 2 and 7 and demonstrates how the succession of empires motif in Daniel 8 has influenced interpretations of the earlier Aramaic four kingdoms traditions. Segal also underscores how inner-biblical interpretation was a driving compositional force for the Danielic apocalypse, which has, at times, resulted in harmonistic exegesis.

Ian Young (“Five Kingdoms, and Talking Beasts: Some Old Greek Variants in Relation to Daniel’s Four Kingdoms”) uses textual variants to recover aspects of Daniel’s rolling redaction and reception. He argues that a comparative

David Koresh?” *Los Angeles Times*, 3 April 1994, <https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1994-04-03-ca-41504-story.html>. In a lyrical rat nest of blended biblical allusions, Koresh in one instance sings: “Babylon’s number four, gonna come to the ground.” This seems to draw upon the division of the great city into three parts, with Babylon receiving her destruction thereafter in Rev 16:17–20. The confused connections between Revelation and Daniel in the song are occasioned by the identification of the book of Daniel as the writing held by the angel in Rev 10:8.

commentary approach to the variants of Daniel will open up fresh perspectives on how individual witnesses or traditions give voice to their particular message among the chorus of Daniel materials from antiquity. Through discussion of select examples between OG and MT witnesses to Daniel, Young demonstrates how the Hebrew tradition occasionally includes adaptations and revisions of the four (or five) kingdoms schema as recovered from the Greek. In this way, traditional text-critical approaches prioritizing MT have overlooked how that tradition is also a site of reception and interpretation of earlier materials.

Using methods of the emerging field of animal studies, Alexandria Frisch (“The Four [Animal] Kingdoms: Understanding Empires as Beastly Bodies”) considers Danielic discourses on empire by exploring the human and beastly bodies that pervade the book’s four kingdom motifs. In this process, the symbolic nature of the animalistic imagery takes on new significance as empires are not only likened to features associated with ravenous animals—for the Danielic tradition, the empires roving the ancient Near East and Mediterranean *were* hybrid wild animals. When considered in the larger chronological and symbolic complexes of other ancient Jewish apocalypses, including 4 Ezra and the Animal Apocalypse of 1 Enoch, Frisch underscores how this understanding in Daniel coheres with other views of antediluvian expressions and eschatological embodiments of empire.

Loren Stuckenbruck (“The Apocalypse of Weeks: Periodization and Tradition-Historical Context”) articulates the multi-tiered historiographical structures of the Enochic Apocalypse of Weeks and finds that, while there is no explicit four kingdom scheme within the work, the understanding and order of eras in Enochic tradition invites comparison with other ancient structures of time. These include variations within Enochic tradition itself (e.g., the Animal Apocalypse) as well as other enumerations of history in numbered periods (e.g., Daniel and Sibylline Oracles). In the course of these comparisons, Stuckenbruck notes the extent and limits of the often-assumed influence of Danielic chronologies on other historiographical structures in ancient Jewish writings. In view of his internal analyses of Apocalypse of Weeks and external comparisons, Stuckenbruck concludes the work “remains distinct” in its combination of numerical structures, making it “difficult to speak of traditions that have either influenced AW directly or have been influenced by it.”

Andrew Perrin (“Expressions of Empire and Four Kingdoms Patterns in the Aramaic Dead Sea Scrolls”) demonstrates how the Aramaic writings among the Qumran collection evidence early uses and formulations of four kingdoms historiographies. Prior to the discovery of these writings from the Judaean wilderness, the book of Daniel included the principle Aramaic participant in this historiographical strategy in ancient Judaism. Some writings, such as the aptly

named 4QFour Kingdoms, however, likely extended a traditional chronology under a new imperial present under Rome apart from a discernable Danielic influence. Other Aramaic writings with less likely four kingdoms structures—such as New Jerusalem, Tobit, and Pseudo-Daniel—are shown to provide a larger context for studying scribal conceptions of time, history, and chronology in Aramaic compositional milieus. In this, the bridge of the four kingdoms motif into ancient Judaism was built by Aramaic scribal culture. Daniel, it seems, was but one traveler among a now larger known set of writings with analogous historiographical inclinations.

Olivia Stewart Lester (“The Four Kingdoms Motif and Sibylline Temporality in Sibylline Oracles 4”) revisits the imperial chronologies of Sibylline Oracles 4 by reading the motif both backwards and forwards in the formation of the tradition. This involves recovering the patterns of four and five kingdoms frameworks within the ten-generation count as well as projecting the interpretive vistas these layered political historiographies opened for audiences through reception history. Interacting with the recent work of Paul Kosmin on conceptions of time and historiography in response to Seleucid rule, Stewart Lester argues that Sibylline Oracles 4 challenges core aspects of his proposal: the text both participates in the continuation of prophecy in ancient Judaism and embraces a large scope of imperial histories in its prophetic construction of time. As a result, she demonstrates how the “fragmented, multiple, non-linear temporality that results from the transformation of the four kingdoms motif in Sib. Or. 4” establishes a determined and disorienting prophetic outlook.

Kylie Crabbe (“The Generation of Iron and the Final Stumbling Block: The Present Time in Hesiod’s *Works and Days* 106–201 and Barnabas 4”) explores the enumeration of generations in Hesiod’s *Works and Days* in order to trace the patterns of decline, resurgence, and comment on the vices of the author’s contemporary world as well as the non-temporal elements that figure in the schema. In view of this re-evaluation of one of the earliest known representations of this historiographical mechanism, Crabbe tracks temporal recalibrations in writings of Virgil and Ovid as they reimagine the golden age, construct triumphalist outlooks, and reinterpret a static past as culminating in their presents on the brink of a decisive transition. With this background in place, Crabbe then studies how Epistle of Barnabas 4 understands Danielic timetables in order to demonstrate the acceptance of past revelation but refutation of earlier interpretations of Hebrew Scripture. In this respect, Barnabas is an example of the reception of a chronological mechanism that provides both a structure of broader time and a sense of its ever-imminent culmination.

Katharina Bracht (“The Four Kingdoms of Daniel in Hippolytus’s *Commentary on Daniel*”) considers the interpretive interface of Jewish scripture

and early Christian exegesis in the earliest, complete commentary on Daniel, dated to 204 CE. Here too, the antique author's awareness of the extent and limits of the four kingdoms chronology demanded a reconfiguration of earlier kingdoms in the schema to open up the fourth slot accommodating the Roman Empire. Hippolytus's overcoming of the temporal and cultural distance with the early Daniel materials was largely informed by the reception of Daniel texts in the New Testament. As a result, Hippolytus reframed the four kingdoms structure into new political and theological domains related to the emergence of Roman dominion, roles of an Antichrist, and ascendancy of divine rule at the second coming. Bracht also demonstrates Hippolytus's cultural encounters with his contemporaries caught up in imminent end-time calculations, particularly those of Montanist leanings. For Hippolytus, the theological issue was less about determining when such events will occur than in having confidence that they will transpire as prophesied in Daniel's convergence of the earthly and eschatological.

Geoffrey Herman ("Persia, Rome and the Four Kingdoms Motif in the Babylonian Talmud") reconsiders the rejection of the apocalypse genre and exegesis of the four kingdoms tradition in rabbinic tradition regarding debates over the exchange of rule between Rome and Persia. Herman considers both a traditional and geographical divide that informed rabbinic receptions of the chronology by recovering varying interpretive perspectives between materials cultivated in Palestinian vs. Babylonian milieus. He uncovers how one's cultural and chronological setting within the broad empires of the Near East informed the perspective on the emergence, continuation, and (non)cessation of ancient superpowers. In the east, the shift from Babylon to Persia was likely most perceptible. In the west, the exchange from Greece to Rome was no doubt most evident. As a result, in addition to varying perceptions of empire and perspectives on their geopolitical exchanges, rabbinic thought offered a number of expectations of the end of empire.

Lorenzo DiTommaso ("The Four Kingdoms of Daniel in the Early Mediaeval Apocalyptic Tradition") plots the emergence and afterlives of the four kingdoms motif in a long arc of apocalyptic historiographies into the twelfth century. Following case studies on three mediaeval Daniel apocalyphtica—two Syriac apocalypses of Daniel and the Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius—he asserts that the political-theological concept of *translatio imperii* that flourished in the mediaeval period extended out of the notion of diminishing rules until the eschatological age. Conceptions of empire, kingdoms, and ages in this era, however, were multivalent and almost always contingent upon the orientation, even location, of writers and rulers in Europe, Africa, and the Middle East. In these larger enterprises of imperial exchange and evolution, the four kingdoms

motif served to support and differentiate identities of insiders and outsiders, eventually giving way to understandings of the transfers of civilization between ages. This ongoing speculation and reorientation, DiTommaso argues, reveals a fundamental pair of functional modalities of apocalyptic speculation birthed in mediaeval scholarship, namely “revolutionary” and “imperial.”

Miriam Hjälms (“The Four Kingdom Schema and the Seventy Weeks in the Arabic Reception of Daniel”) maps the patterns of political prediction and time structures enabled by Danielic schemas in pre-modern Arabic Daniel translations. Hjälms establishes the larger framework of Judaeo-Arabic commentaries, Islamic redeployments of the mechanism, varied *Vorlagen* of Daniel available to translators and communities, and even the expansion of the Danielic visionary cycle. Within this larger complex of texts and traditions, Hjälms reveals how “[t]hrough converts, polemics, and candid inquiry, literary motifs and philosophical ideas easily traversed confessional borders and were adapted to fit new life-worlds.” In this way, a historiographical mechanism which begins in antiquity extends across diverse linguistic, cultural, geographical, and religious axes of reception history.

James Hamrick (“Conflicting Traditions: The Interpretation of Daniel’s Four Kingdoms in the Ethiopic Commentary [Tergwāmē] Tradition”) presses into an uncharted area of biblical reception history and cultural studies by exploring the Ethiopic commentary traditions related to Daniel. These interpretive traditions that took shape in northern Africa maximized the uninterpreted elements of Daniel’s dream-visions to update and adapt the geopolitical vision of the text to a variety of kings and empires from antiquity through the Islamic periods. In some instances, the Ethiopic commentaries are also repositories of reception and debate with other early commentators, such as Hippolytus of Rome. In others, they represent an internal variety of four kingdoms configurations coexisting within a single commentary tradition.

Brennan Breed (“The Politics of Time: Epistemic Shifts and the Reception History of the Four Kingdoms Schema”) sets the discussion of the four kingdoms in reception history within a broader theoretical framework of conceptions, articulations, and organizations of time. Using the notion of chronosophy—the synthesis and expression of a purpose of history—as a departure point, Breed unpacks the political potential of the four kingdoms mechanism for orchestrating time, establishing identities, and affirming control in the diverse reception of Daniel. Breed recovers various inflected readings of the four kingdoms in classical through mediaeval thinkers in Jewish and Christian traditions as well as in Western cartographical representations and technological innovations. Though diverse in their orientation and understanding of the four kingdoms scheme, these channels of reception document the malleability of

the mechanism as individuals, movements, and nations re-assigned and re-configured kingdoms for claims of local and universal sovereignty.

These essays both revisit traditional texts essential to four kingdoms research and reach into corpora and contexts yet to register in the discussion. Our efforts result in both new open-questions and outcomes. While the above essay summaries hint at such contributions worked out in the chapters that follow, it is helpful here to capture some of the impressions and ideas revealed by our collective exploration of the four kingdoms motif. Doing so at the outset is particularly relevant given the inherent interdisciplinarity of the project and hopefully helpful for setting a broader context for readers.

3 Project Outcomes and Open Questions

As noted above, this project aimed to recognize the origins of the four kingdoms motif but to also unmoor ourselves from them. One implication of this was discovering the generative quality of this classic historiographical mechanism. It not only catalyzed traditions in antiquity. It also enabled texts and communities to both recalibrate time and reimagine traditions in exceptionally diverse contexts. This underscores the inherent fallacy of reverse engineering traditions as the only, main, or even highest goal of research on the formation of texts and traditions. The essays below reveal that text-oriented questions are undeniably essential—in most cases, textual representations are our data—yet these find greater significance when merged with cultural studies. Simply put, while much of Daniel's four kingdoms chronologies hinge on events and individuals of the mid-second century BCE, often studied through the lens of Masoretic tradition, that context and this text account for a very small part of the ongoing four kingdoms traditions now available to us.

In various ways, our contributors revealed that the study of the four kingdoms motif in Daniel is also much more dynamic than often recognized. The time structures of Danielic four kingdoms motifs are multi-faceted. They both aided in forming the book and transforming it. This is evident in many ways, not least the surprising varieties of inner workings, or re-workings, of three, four, and five kingdoms historiographies in the manuscript traditions of the book of Daniel. As several contributors show, the four kingdoms in Daniel is not one thing. It is many things. Daniel's kingdoms chronologies are developed and framed differently in the Aramaic and Hebrew chapters, their representations in the Old Greek, and further still in Syriac, Arabic, and Ge'ez translations. In this way, it may be more appropriate to speak of the four kingdoms in Daniel as a complex of time structures and historiographies than as a singular

motif. This requires a broader encounter with the multilingual manuscript traditions for the versions of Daniel without assuming or asserting the priority of a given form of the book.

It is abundantly clear that the four kingdoms motifs before and beyond the book of Daniel were recombined with other traditions as well as served as a way of recalibrating experiences and expectations. Because the motif is inherently bound to impressions or perceptions of empire, the four kingdoms complex provides a rich place to explore views from both east and west as well as from positions of both the powerful and powerless. The literatures studied below reveal how the four kingdoms served as a tool for ordering reality to numerous ends. These include: critiquing contemporary or historic empires, redeploying the identities and reassigning symbols of past empires for emerging ones, problematizing the very idea of empire as evil, legitimating regional sovereigns or those on the horizon, supporting or polemicizing religious movements or theological opponents, clustering existing four kingdoms interpretations, and creating new chronologies accounting for the ongoing *translatio studii et imperii* occasioned by geopolitical overturns or claims. Accounting for this complex goes beyond traditional exegesis. Forward movement on research on the four kingdoms must articulate how this mobile motif was appropriated in local contexts under varied religious and political authorities and was reimagined through cultural forces generating an endless arc of transmission and reception.

In these ways, our project finds a shared departure point in the four kingdoms yet travels outward from it in diverse directions. While the motif might feel familiar from the book of Daniel, our hope is that the present volume invites the readers into foreign spaces. These include deployments in classical and ancient Near Eastern writings, Jewish and Christian scriptures and interpretations, writings among the Dead Sea Scrolls, Apocrypha and pseudepigrapha, depictions in European architecture and cartography, and patristic, rabbinic, Islamic, and African writings ranging from antiquity through the Mediaeval eras.

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The Four Kingdoms and Other Chronological Conceptions in the Book of Daniel

Michael Segal

1 Introduction

The four kingdoms scheme plays a prominent role in the book of Daniel itself, and lies at the foundation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream in chapter 2 and Daniel's vision in chapter 7. The motif of four earthly empires followed by a heavenly kingdom, whose roots can be traced to surrounding cultures, serves both chronological and ideological-theological functions within Daniel itself. In the current study, I want to focus on the former, and place it in the larger context of chronological conceptions throughout the book as a whole. At the same time, the discussion of the ideological worldview of the Danielic authors will be discussed as it relates to these chronological conceptions. All of the chronological schemes in Daniel to be discussed here share a number of basic features, although specific aspects and emphases vary from chapter to chapter. It will be suggested that one aspect, common to the chronological worldview of most early Jewish and Christian apocalypses, is in fact not present in all of the Daniel apocalypses, and this serves as a litmus test for the milieu and historical background in which they were composed.¹ The following five characteristics or features are common to some or all of the Daniel apocalypses.

2 Chronological Span

These characteristics relate to a chronological *span of time*, and not to an event at a specific moment. Within an apocalypse one finds allusions to individual incidents, but the apocalypse as a whole refers to a longer period that includes the individual event. This is common among contemporaneous apocalyptic compositions, such as Jubilees or the Apocalypse of Weeks. However, those are

1 Daniel 2 is included here alongside the apocalypses in chapters 7–12. Although it appears within the context of the narrative about Nebuchadnezzar's challenge to the Babylonian wise men, the dream in that chapter appears to originate from a similar apocalyptic context as the vision in chapter 7. Therefore, for the purposes of this discussion, I will refer to the dream about the statue of different metals as an apocalypse, even if it does not fully correspond to all aspects of the description of the genre as proposed by various scholars.

different in that their span of history begins from the creation of the world. In contrast, throughout Daniel the starting point for this span is a specific historical referent and, in particular, a point in time related to the rise and reign of a foreign empire. Thus, the four kingdoms dream in chapter 2 and vision in chapter 7 begin explicitly with the Babylonian kingdom and reach historically until the Hellenistic empire. The “70 weeks” vision in Daniel 9 covers a period of 490 years, generally assumed to start with the final years of the Babylonian empire. I have argued that it in fact begins with the rise of the Persians, and continues once again through the Hellenistic period.² Daniel 8 covers a similar period, from Media and Persia through Greece. Daniel 11 also begins with Persian kings and then offers a detailed description of the complex interactions between the Seleucids and Ptolemies.

This short survey of the historical periods covered in the Daniel apocalypses leads to the unsurprising conclusion that the primary interest of their authors lay in their contemporary condition. In all of the passages, the current empire (Greece) is the focus of the apocalypse, but is always complemented or contrasted with the immediately prior empire (Persia, and sometimes Media). In the four kingdoms passages, the historical perspective is expanded back even further to include Babylonia.³

The expanded perspective to include at least one, but sometimes multiple, additional empires, including their rise and fall, is part of the internal logic and argument put forth—the current oppressive empire might have the upper hand, but they too will fall one day, just as previous empires did before them.⁴

2 Michael Segal, “The Chronological Conception of the Persian Period in Daniel 9,” *JAJ* 2 (2011): 283–303.

3 The four kingdoms pattern was adopted from non-Israelite/Jewish sources, and adapted to match the Judean reality. In the original (Persian) form of this scheme, Assyria appeared in place of Babylon, leading to a more logical progression of the kingdoms, since Media did indeed take over part of the Assyrian empire. While the origins of the four kingdoms scheme are beyond the scope of this study, they have been discussed extensively in scholarship; see e.g., Joseph W. Swain, “The Theory of the Four Monarchies: Opposition History under the Roman Empire,” *CP* 35 (1940): 1–21; David Flusser, “The Four Empires in the Fourth Sybil and in the Book of Daniel,” *IOS* 2 (1972): 148–75; Louis F. Hartman and Alexander A. Di Lella, *The Book of Daniel: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 23 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1978), 30–33; Doron Mendels, “The Five Empires: A Note on a Propagandistic ‘Topos,’” *AJP* 102 (1981): 330–37; John J. Collins, *A Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 166–70.

4 For a general discussion of the subversive nature of early Jewish apocalyptic literature (including Daniel) against the world empires, see the extensive discussions of Anthea Portier-Young, *Apocalypse Against Empire: Theologies of Resistance in Early Judaism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011).

3 Periodization

The succession of empires is at the same time inherently related to *periodization*, which has a chronological conception at its core. Many Second Temple apocalyptic texts can be characterized by their use of set divisions of times according to which the events of history occur, along the chronological span described above. Thus, the Apocalypse of Weeks divides all of universal history into ten weeks, and each of these can be further subdivided into “days.”⁵ Jubilees dates the events from the creation of the world to the return to the land of Israel according to a system of jubilees and weeks.⁶ The Apocryphon of Jeremiah dates the period between two blasphemous kings, presumably Nebuchadnezzar and Antiochus IV, as ten jubilees.⁷

This final period is equal in length to the “seventy weeks”, or 490, years of Daniel 9. In that sense, one finds the notion of periodization in Daniel as well. However, the scheme in that chapter is different than what is found, for example, in the Apocalypse of Weeks, since, in the latter, the periods are of generally equal length and, therefore, divide history according to a predetermined schematic plan (see section on determinism below). In Daniel 9, the periods in question are not of equal lengths, but are rather divided into seven weeks, sixty-two weeks, and one week (9:24–27). This uneven division is the result of an attempt by this author to fit the events of the Persian period (parallel to the

5 See the article in this volume by Loren Stuckenbruck.

6 See James C. VanderKam, *From Revelation to Canon: Studies in Hebrew Bible and Second Temple Literature*, JSJS 62 (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 522–44; Michael Segal, *The Book of Jubilees: Rewritten Bible, Redaction, Ideology and Theology*, JSJS 117 (Leiden: Brill, 2007), chapter 4 and passim.

7 See Devorah Dimant, ed., “B. Apocryphon of Jeremiah,” in *Qumran Cave 4.XXI: Parabiblical Texts, Part 4: Pseudo-Prophetic Texts*, DJD 30 (Oxford: Clarendon, 2001), 91–260, at 190–191 (a composite text based upon multiple Qumran Cave 4 manuscripts). Bennie H. Reynolds III (*Between Symbolism and Realism: The Use of Symbolic and Non-Symbolic Language in Ancient Jewish Apocalypses 333–63 B.C.E.*, JAJSup 8 [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011], 295–97) has argued that the first blaspheming king is a Persian monarch, since according to his reading of the fragment, the king will arise only after the Babylonian exile. He, therefore, suggests either Cyrus or Darius I as potential candidates for this epithet, but neither is particularly appropriate. However, it seems more likely to me that the period of ten jubilees in this passage begins one generation before the destruction of the temple and its accompanying exile, and the arrival of the blaspheming king (= Nebuchadnezzar) is associated with this destruction. See my discussion of this text in “Interpreting History in Qumran Texts,” in *The Religious Worldviews Reflected in the Dead Sea Scrolls: Proceedings of the Fourteenth International Symposium of the Orion Center for the Study of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Associated Literature*, ed. M. Kister, M. Segal, and R. Clements, STDJ 127 (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 212–44, at 232–36.

seven weeks) and those of his immediate context (the final week) into a larger typological timeframe. In the context of this apocalypse, it is not the periodization itself which is ideologically or theologically significant, but rather the beginning and end of that longer period.⁸

The four kingdoms pattern is also based on a conception of periodization, although they are not of standard, unified length. Instead of a week or jubilee, or some multiple of these periods, the kingdoms are of varying lengths and characters. In this sense the divisions into periods loses some of its deterministic implications, according to which the periods were all part of a carefully devised divine plan. This, however, is achieved through a different approach, since the four kingdoms are predicted in both chapters as part of a divine revelation which is presented as having taken place before most of the chronological span in question, and thus it too is determined, although no more than any other *ex eventu* prophecy.

4 Determinism

Throughout the book, the span of history is presented in the context of prophetic revelations to Daniel (or in the case of chapter 2, to the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar). Based upon historical-critical analysis of these passages, and primarily based upon the argument that the time of their composition can be determined by the accuracy of their “predictions,” we can determine when each of these passages was composed. When the prophecy is correct across extensive details, then it is likely that it was written *ex eventu* of the events alluded to throughout. When the prophecy begins to diverge from what we know to actually have taken place, then we can safely conclude that it was composed at the point in the passage at which the divergence begins. The best example of this (in the entire Bible) is the detailed description of interactions between the Ptolemies and Seleucids in Daniel 11, which is accurate through v. 39, and then diverges at v. 40, demonstrating that it was authored right after the events presented up to that point.⁹ The correspondence to the events, which are

8 Segal, “The Chronological Conception.”

9 Anthony A. Bevan, *A Short Commentary on the Book of Daniel: For the Use of Students* (Cambridge: University Press, 1892), 198–200; James A. Montgomery, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, ICC (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1927), 464–70; Robert H. Charles, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1929), 317–22; Hartman and Di Lella, *Daniel*, 276, 303–305; Collins, *Daniel*, 403; Choon-Leong Seow, *Daniel* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2003), 184–86; Carol A. Newsom with Brennan W. Breed, *Daniel: A Commentary*, OTL (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2014), 358–59.

presented as if they are predictions, has the result of significantly raising the predictive value of the revelation in the eyes of the reader. If the events that appear in the first part of the apocalypse, which reflect the author's past, came to fruition, then there is a high probability that the truly future predictions will occur as well. When combined at times with the notion of periodization described above, they reflect a developed conception of the nature of the divine control of chronological history.

5 Geopolitical Transformation

An important, fundamental difference between the four kingdoms motif and standard periodization schemes is frequently overlooked.¹⁰ According to Daniel 2, the striking of a stone on the foot of the statue led to its destruction in one fell swoop, and to its replacement by a mountain that fills the whole earth. This mountain represents a theocracy in which the God of Heaven rules over the entire world, replacing the earthly empires:

All at once, the iron, clay, bronze, silver, and gold were crushed, and became like chaff of the threshing floors of summer; a wind carried them off until no trace of them was left. But the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

DAN 2:35 NJPS

In contrast to earthly empires that rise and fall, according to Daniel 2, the Heavenly Kingdom will lead to a complete change in world order. Note that, in fact, according to this vision, the entire statue continues to stand until the appearance of the stone, and then comes crashing down in its entirety, indicating that the empires will continue to coexist until the rise of the heavenly kingdom. In this scheme, the periods do not mark the ends of each empire, since they continue even after the next one rises.

Like the destruction of the statue in chapter 2, which leads to the downfall of all of the earthly empires in one fell swoop, so too chapter 7 envisions a single universal heavenly judgment against all of the same political entities, with a similar result:

¹⁰ I have discussed this aspect of both Daniel 2 and 7 in Michael Segal, *Dreams, Riddles, and Visions: Textual, Contextual, and Intertextual Approaches to the Book of Daniel*, BZAW 455 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2016), 144–50.

I looked on. Then, because of the arrogant words that the horn spoke, the beast was killed as I looked on; its body was destroyed and it was consigned to the flames. The dominion of the other beasts was taken away, but an extension of life was given to them for a time and season.

DAN 7:11–12 NJPS

The judgment of the empires is meted out to all of them together, and at a specific time. Their dominion was taken away at this time of collective judgment, and the fourth beast is consigned to fire *before* the other beasts are put to death. Ultimately, therefore, the emphasis in both the dream and the vision is first and foremost not on the appearance and disappearance of the empires in succession, but on the radical geopolitical transformation that will occur at the time of the heavenly judgment. While this does not negate the notion of periodization, the continued persistence of each of the kingdoms until that endpoint suggests that the most important division is not between the periods of each kingdom, but the overall difference between earthly, historical time and the eschatological period that follows.

The picture is different elsewhere in the Daniel apocalypses, and in particular in chapter 8. The depiction there is indeed of the rise and fall of successive empires, one at the hand of the next. The two-horned ram representing Media and Persia was unassailable by other beasts (8:4—“and there was none to deliver from his power”), but is ultimately toppled by the he-goat, representing Greece:

I saw him reach the ram and rage at him; he struck the ram and broke its two horns, and the ram was powerless to withstand him. He threw him to the ground and trampled him, and there was none to deliver the ram from his power.

DAN 8:7 NJPS

That vision does in fact describe the deposing of one empire by another, and I suggest that this later apocalypse has generally influenced the interpretation of chapters 2 and 7 to mean the same.¹¹ However, the vision in chapter 8 is fundamentally different in three ways from those earlier passages:

11 Scholars generally agree that chapter 7 is the earliest of the apocalypses and that chapter 2 is even earlier. In Michael Segal, “Calculating the End: Inner-Danielic Chronological Developments,” *VT* 68 (2018): 272–96, I suggested that Daniel 8 is the latest of the apocalypses, based upon internal chronological-exegetical considerations. While I am no longer convinced that Daniel 8 is necessarily the latest of the apocalypses, I do think it can be safely concluded that it is later than chapter 7 (and 10:1–12:4); see below.

- (i) It does not reflect the four kingdoms motif. Media and Persia are presented as one kingdom in this vision, but even if they were to be counted separately, there would be only three, and not four, kingdoms. While they overlap in the identification of some of the empires, this is due to the significance of these specific kingdoms to the geopolitical reality, and not because of the dependence upon a specific literary genre or scheme.
- (ii) Unlike the four kingdoms motif, in which the kingdoms persist, here there is no doubt that the previous kingdom is removed from the world stage. As noted above, the second kingdom destroyed and deposed the first (that is, it “threw him to the ground and trampled him, and there was none to deliver the ram from his power”).
- (iii) Chapter 8 offers a fundamentally different perspective regarding the eschaton than chapter 2 and 7. While the latter place the global transformation and salvation from persecution at a far-off, indeterminate time (see below regarding the interpretation of 7:25), the former specifies a predetermined, relatively short, period of time until the salvation. This difference will be discussed in the following section.

6 Eschatology

In a number of apocalypses, history culminates in an eschatological moment or era, which is temporally beyond the historical span discussed above. However, the eschaton was not perceived of as a far-off event, but rather the authors of these apocalypses viewed themselves as standing at the cusp of their imminent arrival. This eschatological worldview is fundamental to the conception of Daniel 2, according to which the striking of a stone on the foot of the statue will lead to the transformation into a mountain that fills the whole earth. This mountain represents a theocracy in which the God of Heaven rules over the entire world, replacing the earthly empires:

And in the time of those kings, the God of Heaven will establish a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, a kingdom that shall not be transferred to another people. It will crush and wipe out all these kingdoms, but shall itself last forever.

DAN 2:44 NJPS

This major transformation of the world order is characteristic of the eschatological era as conceived in contemporaneous compositions. Note that there are no dates or precise chronological data regarding the eschaton in this dream and interpretation.

I have recently suggested a similar understanding of Daniel 7, based on a new interpretation of a key expression in 7:25.¹² This chapter is probably the most intricate in the entire book, including its mythic background and complex theological picture, as well as basic questions of interpretation. I have argued that this chapter should first be interpreted independent of the subsequent apocalypses, in chapters 8–12.¹³ This methodological approach is a result of the general consensus that Daniel 7 is the earliest of the apocalypses (preceded only by the composition of the dream in Daniel 2, dated according to its historical allusions; see especially the Old Greek version of 2:41–42),¹⁴ as can be demonstrated based upon both its historical allusions and its linguistic differentiation from the later chapters. In my opinion, these later chapters, which according to all scholars were composed subsequent to chapter 7, read and interpret this earlier chapter and, therefore, will at times change its original meaning and message.¹⁵ Analysis of the second half of Daniel frequently proceeds from the assumption that each of the four apocalypses (chs. 7; 8; 9; 10–12) reflects the same viewpoint, emanating from a single author, or else from a likeminded and interrelated “school” of authors. This assumption is then applied in a harmonistic fashion in the exegesis of the book, both by traditional interpreters and critical scholars, who interpret one apocalypse with the aid of the other.¹⁶ However, if the apocalyptic visions were not all composed by one author and at one time, then a later apocalypse might be based upon an earlier one.

12 See below, and more extensively Segal, “Calculating the End.”

13 For the importance of this methodological assumption regarding the chronological background of Daniel 7, see Segal, “Calculating the End.” For its importance for the theological background of Daniel 7, see Segal, *Dreams, Riddles, and Visions*, 150–52.

14 See Hartman and Di Lella, *Daniel*, 141, 148–49.

15 Other scholars have previously proposed complex processes of literary and scribal development for chapters 7–12; cf. e.g., H. L. Ginsberg, *Studies in Daniel*, TS 14 (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1948), 29–40. Closer to the general approach posited here is the statement by R. G. Kratz (“The Visions of Daniel,” in *The Book of Daniel: Composition and Reception*, ed. John J. Collins and Peter W. Flint, VTSup 83 [Brill: Leiden, 2001], 1:91–113, esp. 94): “the visions accumulate successively. The whole work is a textbook example of inner-Biblical exegesis ...”

16 See the programmatic statement supporting this approach, in the context of Danielic chronology and eschatology, by John J. Collins, “The Meaning of ‘the End’ in the Book of Daniel,” in *Of Scribes and Scrolls: Studies on the Hebrew Bible, Intertestamental Judaism, and Christian Origins: Presented to John Strugnell on the Occasion of His Sixtieth Birthday*, ed. H. W. Attridge, John J. Collins, and Thomas H. Tobin, S. J., CTSRR 5 (Lanham: University Press of America, 1990), 91–98, esp. 97: “As the book stands, in any case, the visions in chaps. 7–12 must be read as complementary, and not as independent compositions.”

This inner-Danielic interpretation has led to an almost absurd situation, in which the latest layers of the book are those that have determined how exegetes and scholars have interpreted the earlier stages of the book. This is perhaps an unavoidable result for any composition that has developed incrementally through a redactional process. But it is our responsibility to attempt to untangle these complex processes, and avoid the pitfalls of harmonistic, synchronic interpretation that does not distinguish between early and late, and between a source and its interpretation. I offer this pointed critique at many existing studies and commentaries to Daniel, because such an approach silences the voices of these earliest authors, and prevents us from appreciating their writings in a nuanced fashion.

I suggest that this methodological approach is crucial for understanding the chronological conception of Daniel 7, which shares a number of basic characteristics with Daniel 2 already mentioned above: the four kingdoms scheme and the radical geopolitical transformation of the world, culminating in the transfer of dominion from the empires to the *עַמֵּי קַדְיִישֵׁי עֲלִיּוֹנִין* (7:18, 22, 27). As I have argued, contrary to the standard translation as “(the people of) the holy ones of the Most High,” this title should perhaps be translated as “(the people of) the Most High Holy one(s),” referring to God and His nation Israel. Therefore, chapter 7 presents a similar picture of cosmological transformation as in chapter 2.¹⁷ But beyond that, I suggest that chapter 7 shares the same eschatological conception as chapter 2 (and other apocalyptic texts).

Verse 25 is fundamental for recognizing this eschatological worldview in Daniel 7. Near the end of the apocalypse in Daniel 7, it is said that the final horn will speak words against the Most High and think of changing times and law:

וּמְלִיץ לְצַד עֲלִיאַ (עֲלֵאָה) יִמְלֹל וְלְקַדְיִישֵׁי עֲלִיּוֹנִין יִבְלֵא וְיִסְבֵּר לְהַשְׁנִיָּה זְמַנִּין וְדַת וְיַתְיַבְּחֵן
בִּידֵהּ עַד־עֵדָן וְעַד־נִיָּן וּפְלֵג עֵדָן:

He will speak words against the Most High, and will speak (against) *קַדְיִישֵׁי עֲלִיּוֹנִין* (the Most High Holy One[s]), and will think to change times and law, and they will be delivered into his hands *עַד־עֵדָן וְעַד־נִיָּן וּפְלֵג עֵדָן*.

DAN 7:25 MT

The final clause is often translated as “until a time, and times, and half a time” (7:25). The term *עֵדָן* is generally interpreted here as one year; the use of *עַד־עֵדָן* to

17 See Segal, *Dreams, Riddles, and Visions*, 132–54, and the larger argument presented there for understanding the theological picture of Daniel 7, according to which the Ancient of Days is YHWH himself.

mean “year” is attested in Daniel 4, according to which Nebuchadnezzar lived like a beast in the field for *שבעה עֲדָנִין* (4:13, 20, 22, 29), which seemingly refers to a period of seven years.¹⁸ If *עֲדָן* reflects a basic unit of one year, then the plural *עֲדָנִין* can be understood as two years. This can be accomplished either through revocalizing the Aramaic form as a dual *עֲדָנִין*,¹⁹ or by simply understanding the plural form here with dual meaning.²⁰ Finally, *פִּלְגַּ עֲדָן* is taken to be another half-year, taking the Aramaic *פִּלְגַּ*, to mean “half,” which is its predominant meaning.²¹ This leads to the sum total of 3.5 years.

A synchronic reading of the book of Daniel seems to support this interpretation, because the length of time of the religious persecution is 3.5 years in other verses in the apocalyptic section of the book. Thus, for example, Dan 9:27 reads: *וְחֻצֵי הַשָּׁבוּעַ יִשְׁבִּית זָבַח וּמִנְחָה* (“for *half a week* he will put a stop to the sacrifice and the meal offering”), corresponding to the period described in 7:25 during which the holy ones of the Most High were given into the hands of the little horn. In the context of the “seventy weeks” vision in Daniel 9, in which a week refers to seven years, then the “half a week” during which the sacrifices were stopped can be calculated as 3.5 years.

Returning to the methodological observation above, while this is the meaning of the expression when read in the context of chapters 8–12, I suggest that

18 The term *עֲדָן* could alternatively be translated as “season” and the expression in Daniel 4 as “seven seasons,” but the extrabiblical evidence concerning Nabonidus’s sojourn in Teima for 10 years, which is the historical kernel behind this chapter, supports the interpretation here as “years.” For a discussion of the literary and historical background of this chapter, see, e.g., Collins, *Daniel*, 217–19; M. Henze, *The Madness of King Nebuchadnezzar: The Ancient Near Eastern Origins and Early History of Interpretation of Daniel 4*, JSJS 61 (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 51–73; Carol A. Newsom, “Why Nabonidus? Excavating Traditions from Qumran, the Hebrew Bible, and Neo-Babylonian Sources,” in *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Transmission of Traditions and Production of Texts*, ed. Sarianna Metso, Hindy Najman, and Eileen Schuller, STDJ 92 (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 57–79; and R. G. Kratz, “Nabonid in Qumran,” in *Wissenskultur in Orient und Okzident*, ed. Eva Cancik-Kirschbaum, Margarete van Ess, and Joachim Marzahn, Topoi: BSAW 1 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2011), 253–70.

19 John E. Goldingay, *Daniel*, WBC 30 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1989), 144, n. 4e–e; 146, n. 25d.

20 So Bevan, *Daniel*, 126; Montgomery, *Daniel*, 312; Charles, *Daniel*, 194; Hartman and Di Lella, *Daniel*, 204, 261 (translate “two years” without comment); Newsom, *Daniel*, 366. A. Lacocque, (*The Book of Daniel*, trans. D. Pellauer [Atlanta: John Knox, 1979], 154) translates “two years” and suggests that this is one of the earliest examples of the rabbinic principle of interpreting unspecified plural forms as referring to two.

21 Cf. e.g. HALOT, 1956; DJA, 73, s.v. *פִּלְגַּ* and *פִּלְגֵּוּ*; DJPA, 434, s.v. *פִּלְגֵּוּ*; DJBA, 910–911, s.v. *פִּלְגֵּוּ*; M. Sokoloff, *A Syriac Lexicon: A Translation from the Latin, Correction, Expansion, and Update of C. Brockelmann’s Lexicon Syriacum* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns; Piscataway: Gorgias, 2009), 1194, s.v. *פִּלְגֵּוּ*.

reading Daniel 7 on its own terms does not lead to the 3.5 years interpretation, and instead needs to be read in light of its apocalyptic and eschatological context.²²

An internal analysis of the apocalypse in Daniel 7 leads to a different understanding of the expression עֵדֵן (ו)עֲדֵנִין. The noun עֵדֵן appears twice in the apocalypse, in 7:25 (the verse under discussion) and in 7:12:

וְשָׂר חַיּוֹתָא הָעֵדִיּוֹ שְׁלֹטְנָהוֹן וְאַרְבָּה בְּחַיִּין יְהִיבַת לְהוֹן עֵדֵן זְמַן וְעֵדֵן:

The dominion of the other beasts was taken away, but an extension of life was given to them **until a time and season**.

Within the context of the apocalypse, the other beasts, which reflect the heavenly representatives (or function as symbols) of the first three empires in the four kingdom scheme, were removed from their positions of authority, but remain until זְמַן וְעֵדֵן. The terms זְמַן and עֵדֵן function as a word pair (cf., e.g., 2:21 וְהוּא מַהֲשֵׁנָא עֲדֵנִיא וְזְמַנִּיא [“he changes times and seasons”]),²³ and their use here is not related to a yearlong period or any multiple thereof. Rather, they refer to a point in time, although that time is left unspecified. The use of the Aramaic preposition עַד in this verse indicates that the extension will continue until a specific endpoint, and the use of the word pair serves as emphasis for this moment, which I suggest based on the context should be understood as the eschaton. Each of the three beasts was removed from dominion, and their empires fell from glory. However, they do not disappear completely until זְמַן וְעֵדֵן, at which time all the empires will disappear and dominion will pass to the “one like a man” (vv. 13–14).

22 This has been recognized previously by a few scholars. Montgomery, *Daniel*, 312–15, identifies two interpretive options for the expression in 7:25. He proposed a “definite,” “exact” approach (3.5 years) or an “indefinite era” expressed “in apocalyptic fashion” (cf. the apocalyptic interpretation to be suggested below, although it is based upon a different reading than he suggests). Goldingay, *Daniel*, 181, asserts that this expression “is not a cryptic way of saying 3½ years” and distinguishes between 7:25 and the chronological data in chapters 8–12. Instead, he posits that the sequence of elements in this expression refers to an unspecified “time that threatens to extend itself longer,” which is “brought to a sudden termination.” Seow, *Daniel*, 112, refers to the general 3.5 year interpretation of the expression in 7:25 as “somewhat of a stretch,” which in any event does not precisely reflect the events during Antiochus’s reign. His interpretation of 7:25 focuses on the finite aspect of עֵדֵן for the description of human rule, as opposed to eternal divine rule in v. 27.

23 Cf. also Eccl 3:1; *Tg. Jon.* Judg 17:10; *Tg. Esth.* 1:13.

This seems to be the sense of v. 22 that uses the term זמן by itself:

עַד דִּיאֲתָה עֲתִיק יוֹמִיא וְדִנָּא יְהָב לְקַדְיָשִׁי עֲלִיוֹנִין וְזְמַנָּא מְסָהּ וּמְלֻכוּתָא הֶחֱסֵנוּ
קַדְיָשִׁין:

(I looked on as that horn made war with the holy ones and overcame them,) until the Ancient of Days came and judgment was rendered in favor of the holy ones of the Most High, for **the time had come**, and the holy ones took possession of the kingdom.

DAN 7:22 NJPS

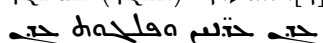
This verse describes “the time,” following the horn’s struggle with the holy ones, when the Ancient of Days will rule against the horn, and the holy ones will receive dominion over the kingdom. The use of זמן here in v. 22 matches that of זמן ועדן in v. 12, and both refer to the moment at which the kingdoms of the world will disappear, and dominion will be given to קדישי עליונין. Neither case refers to a measurement of time, such as a year, but rather to a turning point when the world will undergo dramatic change.

The textual witnesses to 7:25bβ attest to two slightly different readings, although I suggest this discrepancy is crucial for its interpretation.

Reading 1:

MT עֲדָן עֲדָן וְעֲדָן וְפִלְגָּ עֲדָן ≈ OG ἔως καιροῦ και καιροῶν και ἔως ἡμίσεος καιροῦ²⁴
(≈ Theod, Vulgate)

Reading 2:

4QDan^a (4Q112)²⁵ עֲדָן [וְפִלְגָּ עֲדָן] = Pesh חַבְבָּ חַבְבָּ חַבְבָּ חַבְבָּ חַבְבָּ חַבְבָּ


The two versions are almost identical, with one minor difference: the presence of the copulative *waw* in between עדן and עדנין in Reading 1. I suggest that further evidence for Reading 2 can be adduced from the corresponding passage

24 The reading of OG here follows MS 88 and Syh; Pap. 967 reads ἔως καιροῶν και ..., omitting καιροῦ και due to parablepsis. The repetition of the preposition ἔως prior to “half a time” is probably for stylistic reasons alone.

25 The text here is quoted according to E. C. Ulrich, “112. 4QDan^a,” in *Qumran Cave 4.XI: Psalms to Chronicles*, ed. E. C. Ulrich and Peter W. Flint, DJD 16 (Oxford: Clarendon, 2000), 239–54, at 252.

in Dan 12:7: **כִּי לְמוֹעֵד מוֹעֲדִים וְחָצִי**. That expression is almost certainly a Hebrew translation of 7:25,²⁶ and it lacks a *waw* between **מוֹעֵד** and **מוֹעֲדִים**.²⁷

The small divergence between the two readings could admittedly be a minor stylistic difference. If, however, we assess Reading 2 on its own merits, then we can offer an alternative, independent explanation of its meaning. Instead of taking the first two elements in Reading 2, **עֵדֶן עֲדִינִן**, as individual components in a list, they can be understood as two nouns in a construct relationship. This is, in fact, how both Theodotion and the Vulgate translate **מוֹעֵד מוֹעֲדִים** (ל) in 12:7: Theod—(εἰς) *καρπὸν καρπῶν*; Vulgate—(in) *tempus temporum*, which as suggested above goes back to Reading 2 of 7:25. This reading, which can be translated as “time of times,” can be best understood as a superlative, “the ultimate/final time,” as in other instances of the use of a substantive followed by the same substantive in plural.²⁸ In light of the analysis above of 7:12 and 22, this “time of times” or “final time” would similarly refer to the eschaton. The use of the superlative is appropriate to the style and context of Daniel 7, which employs terminology and imagery such as **אלף אלפים** (אלפין) (v. 10); **רבו רבון** (רבבן) (v. 10); **שלטנה שלטן עלם** (v. 14); **קדישי עליונין** (vv. 18, 22, 25, 27); **עד עלמא ועד** (רבבן) (v. 10); **עלם עלמא** (v. 18); **עד סופא** (v. 26); **עלם עלמא** (v. 18); **מלכותה מלכות עלם** (v. 27).

Thus the first part of the expression in 7:25bβ, according to Reading 2, can be translated: “and they will be delivered into his power until the final time.” This matches perfectly the apocalyptic worldview of this chapter, which stands at the end of the Aramaic section of the book. I suggest that Reading 1 was created by a copyist who misunderstood **עֵדֶן עֲדִינִן** in Reading 2 as two separate items in a list and, therefore, added a *waw*, which is linguistically justifiable in such a case. However, it altered the text from its original meaning.

What remains to be explained is **עֵדֶן** and **ופלג**. Most translators and commentators suggest that this term should be translated as “half a time/year,” in line with the general 3.5 years interpretation. The translation of **פלג** as “half” reflects its most common meaning, and this translation is even more tempting in light of the use of the Hebrew term **חצי(1)** in the parallel Hebrew expression in 12:7.

26 Note the theory of Ginsberg (*Studies*, 41–61), that the Hebrew sections of Daniel were translated from Aramaic (esp. p. 61 regarding the verb **חצו** in 11:4 with the meaning “to divide [into more than two parts]” which he suggests is a translation of the Aramaic **פלג**.) Although the overall theory of a Hebrew translation of an Aramaic text is not convincing, it makes sense that a bilingual author would employ calques that do not completely semantically overlap, leading to the impressive list of examples adduced by Ginsberg.

27 The Old Greek of 12:7 translates εἰς *καρπὸν καὶ καρπῶν* but this is almost certainly a harmonistic correction towards 7:25 (according to Reading 1).

28 GKC §133i; Joüon–Muraoka §141i; cf. e.g., Gen 9:25; Isa 34:10; Ezek 16:7; 26:7; Eccl 1:2. Note that according to this interpretation, there is no need to posit that the form **עֲדִינִן** is a dual form or has dual meaning.

However, I suggest that this Aramaic expression can be best understood in the light of what I believe is its equivalent Hebrew expression. The Aramaic verb פלג means “separate, divide,” and is cognate with the Hebrew root חל”ק,²⁹ with the verb carrying the meaning “divide,” and the substantive having the meaning “part, portion.” I propose that the noun פלג in Dan 7:25 corresponds to the Hebrew מחלקת “division,”³⁰ and the construct expression פלג עדן to the Hebrew מחלקת (ה)עת. Note, for example, the parallelism between פלגה and מחלקה in Ezra 6:18:

והקימו כהנאי בפלגתהון ולויאי במחלקתהון על-עבדות אלהא די בירושלם בכתב ספר משה:

They appointed the priests in their courses and the Levites in their divisions for the service of God in Jerusalem, according to the prescription in the Book of Moses.

Ezra 6:18 NJPS

Furthermore, the biblical Hebrew term מחלקת (in its different shades of meaning) is translated consistently in the Peshitta and in the Targumim, by nominal forms of פלג/פלג. ³¹ This formal equivalence becomes significant when we notice that the construct expression מחלקת העת “division/part of time” is attested in both singular (4Q228, see below), and in plural forms in Qumran manuscripts (the plural forms are attested primarily in Jubilees manuscripts from Qumran).³² These attestations are all found in apocalyptic contexts, according to which the events of history unfold according to clearly defined chronological periods and patterns, and occur according to set “divisions of times.”³³

29 This claim can be demonstrated by the use of פלג / פלג as a standard translational equivalent of חל”ק in the Peshitta and the Aramaic Targumim.

30 BDB, 324–25; HALOT, 569–70; DCH 5:219–20; M. Z. Kaddari, *A Dictionary of Biblical Hebrew* [Hebrew] (Ramat-Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 2006), 600. In biblical Hebrew, the term is used in two primary contexts: portions of inheritance (which are divided), and in LBH priestly and levitical “divisions,” by which they were organized. Note DCH, 220, meaning (4), “division of time, season,” in which all of the Qumran examples adduced here are recorded.

31 Peshitta: Josh 11:23; 18:10; Ezek 48:29; 1 Chr 24:1; 26:1, 12, 19; 27:1–15; 28:1, 21; 2 Chr 31: 15–17; Targumim: Josh 11:23; 12:7; 18:10; Ezek 48:29; 1 Chr 23:6; 24:1; 26:1, 12, 19; 27:1–15; 28:1, 13, 21; 2 Chr 8:14; 23:8; 31:2, 15–17; 35:4, 10.

32 Cf. also CD 16:3; ספר מחלקות העתים; and 4Q384 9:2, [בספר מ]חלקות העת[ים].

33 D. Dimant, “What is ‘The Book of the Divisions of Times?’” in *Shai le-Sara Japhet: Studies in the Bible, Its Exegesis and Its Language*, ed. M. Bar-Asher et al. (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 2007), 273–85 (Hebrew), provides an extensive discussion for the background of this expression. While I agree with most of her analysis, the discussion here suggests that מחלקת העת is not specifically a sectarian term, since it appears in Aramaic in Dan 7:25.

The expression is especially prominent in the opening chapter of Jubilees (Prologue, 1:4, 26, 29) and at its conclusion (50:13), which emphasize that the “divisions of times” span from the time of creation all the way until the eschaton, at which time there will be a new creation. It also appears a number of times in a fragmentary scroll (4Q228), published in DJD 13. This scroll, dated paleographically to 50–25 BCE, was entitled “Text with a Citation of *Jubilees*,” but seems instead to be the remains of a previously unknown eschatological composition.³⁴ Fragment 1, col. i, is the best preserved of the scroll and is the passage relevant to our discussion:³⁵

[-- אֹת] מ [במחל] ק[ו] ת הַעֲתִים	2
[-- וְאֵגִיד] הָ לְכַמָּה אֲשֶׁר תִּדְעוּ	3
[-- וְאֶסְפַּר] לְפָנָי מִחֲלֻקַּת עֵתוֹ וְכֹל	4
[-- מ] [--] בְּהַ מְשַׁפֵּט עֵתִי עוֹלָה	5
[-- אֲשֶׁר בּוֹעֵרֶת אוֹכֵלֶת בְּסוּד רִשְׁעָה	6
[-- ת] בְּמִחֲלֻקַּת עֵתָהּ יִמְצָאֶנָּה	7
[-- מ] מְקֻשֵׁי שַׁחַת וּמִלֶּאֶךְ שְׁלוֹמוֹ	8
[-- ח] נֶצַח כִּי כֵן כָּתוּב בְּמִחֲלֻקֵּי	9
[-- ל] יִלְכּוּ וְאֵתְמ[ה] אֶת כֹּל	10

- 2 [the]m [in the divi]s[ion]s of the times
 3 [and I tol]d you so that you may know
 4 [and I recoun]ted before him **the division of its/his time** and all
 5 [] m[]bh in the judgment of times of wickedness
 6 [] a fire burning, devouring in a council³⁶ of evil
 7 []t in the **division of its/her time** he will find it/her
 8 [] snares of destruction, and the angel of his peace
 9 [lif]e of eternity. For thus is it written in **the division**^s
 10 []lm they will walk. And yo[u] all the

Therefore, it needs to be considered as part of a broader eschatological worldview, and not limited to sectarian ideology.

34 J. C. VanderKam and J. T. Milik, “228. 4QText with a Citation of *Jubilees*,” in *Qumran Cave 4. VIII: Parabiblical Texts, Part 1*, eds. H. W. Attridge et al., DJD 13 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 177–85. See already the discussion in Dimant, “The Book of the Divisions of Times,” in which she convincingly argues that line 9 does not refer to the book of Jubilees, which renders the name assigned to the scroll problematic.

35 The text and translation follow VanderKam and Milik, “4Q228,” 178–81, with minor modifications.

36 VanderKam and Milik, “4Q228,” 180, translate “foundation of evil,” but the relevant sources they adduce from sectarian literature (see “4Q228,” 182) support the translation “council” (used in parallel to עצה/עצה).

While the precise details of this passage are not fully clear, it appears to describe the events of various periods of history, including those of the addressee (line 4). These periods include “times of wickedness” (line 5) to be accompanied by judgment, with burning and devouring of a “council of evil” (line 6). There appears to be a transition in line 8 from a time of judgment and destruction to a more positive reality, accompanied by “the angel of his peace” and “eternal (life?)” (line 9). These are recorded in “the division^s [of times]” (lines 9–10), either a reference to an actual literary composition or, more likely in my opinion, a heavenly register of the periods of history. Here too, the eschatological context of the expression *מהלקת העת* is palpable.

In light of this analysis, I suggest that it is preferable to translate *פלג עדן* in Dan 7:25 not as “half a year,” but rather, as “and the division of (the) time.” How does this phrase relate to the previous clause “and they will be delivered into his power until the final time”? The simplest approach is to posit that “the division of time” is synonymous to “the time of times,” and they both reflect objects of the preposition *עד* referring to the same final period of history. This repetition could then perhaps be seen as added for emphasis.³⁷ This proposed interpretation for Dan 7:25, without recourse to the later chapters of Daniel, offers a completely different perspective of the end of this apocalypse than the general interpretation of 3.5 years until the end of Antiochus’s decrees, and broadens its original chronological horizon to an unknown end-point, consistent with other apocalyptic visions. This supports the conclusion that the apocalypse in its current form was composed at some point in time after the beginning of Antiochus’s decrees in 167 BCE,³⁸ but prior to the rededication of the Temple in 164, at which time such a dramatic perspective was a matter of speculation and wild hope.³⁹

37 In Segal, “Calculating the End,” 283–86, due to the redundancy created by assuming that the two expressions are in fact synonymous, I offered a second, more complex, interpretation of the meaning and syntactic function of *פלג עדן*. This included an alternate verse division, moving it to the beginning of v. 26, leading to a picture according to which the final divine judgment will take place in the last (sub-)division of time prior to the eschaton, a theme that finds parallels in additional apocalyptic compositions (see especially the Apocalypse of Weeks in 1 Enoch 91).

38 It is generally accepted by scholars that the expression *יִסְבֵּר לְהַשְׁנִיָּה זְמַנֵּי וְדָת* (“he will think of changing times and laws”) in Dan 7:25 is a reference to these decrees. It is perhaps possible to date this apocalypse even more precisely, since there is no mention here of the actual profanation of the Temple. This suggests that it was composed in late 167 BCE, after the decrees but before the profanation (cf. e.g., Collins, *Daniel*, 323–24).

39 Thus despite the suggestion here of an eschatological perspective at the heart of 7:25, this does not alter the generally accepted date of composition for this apocalypse in its current form.

A similar situation obtains in Daniel 11, when one realizes (as scholars previously have) that the chronological data following this apocalypse, in 12:7, 11, 12, is secondary to the chapter. In fact, the original end of the apocalypse, and perhaps of the book of Daniel as a whole, was probably in 12:4 (“But you, Daniel, keep the words secret, and seal the book until the time of the end. Many will range far and wide and knowledge will increase”), followed by a secondary expansion or appendix in 12:5–13.⁴⁰ This leaves us with another apocalypse, Daniel 11, which in its original form did not include a specific date by which Antiochus’s decrees would end. Rather, it refers more generally to times using the terms קץ (11:27, 35, 40; 12:4, 9, 13) and מועד (11:27, 35).

Scholars have long noted that this apocalypse can be divided into 11:1–39, which refers to events that came to fruition, and 11:40ff., which does not match the historical reality.⁴¹ Therefore, the general scholarly consensus for dating the apocalypse in Daniel 11 is prior to Antiochus’s death in Persia in 164 BCE (since he perished under different circumstances than those described in 11:40–45), and consequently prior to the end of the decrees in December 164 BCE. We can, therefore, identify a common characteristic of Daniel 7 and 10:1–12:4, both of which were composed prior to the end of Antiochus’s decrees, and neither of which hazarded a guess to predict their end. Instead both spoke generally of a time, עדן and זמן in Daniel 7, and קץ and מועד in Daniel 11–12.

Before analyzing the other passages in the Daniel apocalypses that address the end of the persecution, it is important to briefly mention the extra-Danielic sources that describe for how long it continued, and in particular the

40 Many scholars have noted that 12:4 functions as a conclusion to the vision in chapters 10–11. Daniel 12:5–13 constitutes a new literary unit, which functions as an appendix; see G. A. Barton, “The Composition of the Book of Daniel,” *JBL* 17 (1898): 62–86, at 77; Montgomery, *Daniel*, 474; Ginsberg, *Studies*, 30–31; Hartman and Di Lella, *Daniel*, 261, 310–15; Lacocque, *Daniel*, 181–83; Collins, *Daniel*, 371; Seow, *Daniel*, 191–92; Newsom, *Daniel*, 365–68. While there is general agreement about the division between the two sections, scholars disagree about the origins of the appendix. Montgomery, Lacocque, and Collins view 12:5–13 as a passage composed by the same author as 10:1–12:4 (except perhaps for 12:11–12 which are identified as scribal, chronological “updates”). In contrast, Barton, Ginsberg, Hartman and Di Lella, and Seow view the appendix as a secondary addition to the book (see especially Ginsberg, *Studies*, 30–38 [followed by Hartman and Di Lella], who reconstructs a complex process of secondary accretions by a number of scribal hands). As I argued in “The Text of Daniel in the Dead Sea Scrolls,” *Meghillot* 11–12 (2015): 171–98, at 188–90 (Hebrew), I am of the opinion that the appendix is a secondary addition to the previous vision(s), which subtly reformulates certain elements in Daniel 11 in order to include the “many” (רבים) in what was originally described as limited to the משכילים (I suggest this term should be translated as “teachers”). In particular, compare the reformulation of 11:33 and 35 in 12:10.

41 See above, n. 9.

deseccration of the Temple and its cult. The most explicit chronological information about the length of this deseccration, including the dates of both the deseccration and rededication, is found in both First and Second Maccabees.⁴²

1 Macc 1:54, 59: (54) And on the **15th day of Cheseleu in the 145th year**, he constructed an abomination of desolation on the altar, and in the cities around Iouda they built altars ... (59) **On the 25th of the month** they were sacrificing on the altar that was on top of the sacrificial altar.

1 Macc 4:52–54: (52) And they arose on the morning of the **25th of the ninth month, this being the month Cheseleu, of the 148th year**, (53) and they offered sacrifice according to the law on the new altar of whole burnt offerings that they made. (54) **During the same time and on the same day** on which the nations defiled it, **on that day** it was rededicated with songs and lyres and cinyras and cymbals.

2 Macc 10:5: It happened that **on the same day** on which the shrine had been profaned by allophytes the purification of the shrine took place, that is, **on the 25th day of the same month, which was Cheseleu**.⁴³

According to 1 Maccabees, the profanation of the altar lasted for precisely three years from the 25th of Kislev in the 145th year of the Seleucid count (= 167 BCE) until the same date three years later in 164 BCE.⁴⁴ Whether or not this information reflects historical reality,⁴⁵ it is highly significant that the same (or a similar) tradition, and emphasis of that tradition, appears in both of these books.⁴⁶

42 For a clear presentation of the dates surrounding the profanation and rededication of the Temple, cf. J. A. Goldstein, *II Maccabees: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 41A (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1983), 115–18.

43 The translations here follow the New English Translation of the Septuagint (NETS).

44 As can be seen from the dates in 1 Maccabees, the period of three years measured the time from the offering of foreign sacrifices on the Temple altar, and not the erection of the abomination, which took place ten days earlier. In any event, the period of three years and ten days is not identical to any of the sources in Daniel.

45 The emphasis on the beginning and end occurring on the same date might reflect a literary-theological motif that emphasizes divine justice and involvement in history; see I. Gafni, "Concepts of Periodization and Causality in Talmudic Literature," *JH* 10 (1996): 21–38, at 28–29.

46 According to 2 Macc 10:3, 5, the cessation of the daily sacrifice lasted precisely two years, and not three, as in 1 Maccabees. For the background of this chronological anomaly, see Goldstein, *II Maccabees*, 55–63; D. R. Schwartz, *2 Maccabees*, CEJL (Berlin: Walter de

At a minimum, we can conclude that following the rededication of the Temple, there was a widespread understanding that the profanation lasted for precisely three years. At a maximum, this indeed reflected the reality behind the events.

Three passages in Daniel provide precise periods of time for the length of the persecution, although they are not identical to the three-year period of 1 Maccabees. I suggest that this discrepancy is the result of an attempt to conform the reference to the eschaton in Dan 7:25 to the historical reality, following the cessation of the religious persecution and desolation of the Temple.

6.1 *Daniel 9:27*

The verse in question reads: וַחֲצִי הַשָּׁבוּעַ יִשְׁבֹּט יָבֵחַ וַיִּמְנָחָהּ (“for half a week he will put a stop to the sacrifice and the meal offering”). This is an allusion to Antiochus’s profanation of the altar in the final week of the seventy-week scheme in the vision. Scholars correctly delimit this “week” between 171–164 BCE, beginning with the murder of the “anointed one,” the high priest Onias III (cf. Dan 11:22 and 2 Macc 4:30–38), and ending with the cessation of Antiochus’s decrees.⁴⁷ Since this chapter refers to weeks of seven years, then a period of half a week can be easily calculated as 3.5 years. If this is the case, then this would perhaps be early evidence for reading 7:25 as “a year, (two) years, and half a year.”⁴⁸ This apocalypse, which assigns a finite measure to the period until the end of Antiochus’s profanation of the Temple, is most likely an *ex eventu* prophecy, composed following the end of the profanation. This explains the general accuracy regarding the length of the desecration.⁴⁹

Gruyter, 2008), 372–73, who both suggest that it is an error that can be understood as the result of the editorial process by which 2 Maccabees was composed. In any event, the emphasis “on the same day” in 2 Maccabees seems to reflect the same tradition as in 1 Maccabees.

47 Hartman and Di Lella, *Daniel*, 252; Lacocque, *Daniel*, 196–97; Collins, *Daniel*, 356–58; Newsom, *Daniel*, 306–7.

48 Numerous scholars assume this equivalence, and use it to interpret 7:25, e.g., Hartman and Di Lella, *Daniel*, 215; Lacocque, *Daniel*, 154; Collins, *Daniel*, 357; Newsom, *Daniel*, 267, 366 (referring to 12:7). Montgomery, *Daniel*, 386, first notes that a “half-week” = 3.5 years, but then notes that this period is so close to the three years of 1 Maccabees that it allows for the possibility of viewing this statement as either “prophetic or *post eventum*.”

49 Contra those who suggest that this was a “genuine prediction” written before December 164 BCE, since it “slightly overshot its mark” and, therefore, would not have been written *ex eventu* (see e.g., Hartman and Di Lella, *Daniel*, 253).

6.2 *Daniel 12:11–12*

A more precise analysis is possible in reference to this passage:

וּמַעַת הַיּוֹסֵר הַתְּמִיד וְלִתְּת שְׁקוּץ שָׁמַם יָמִים אֶלֶף מֵאָתַיִם וְהַשְּׁעִים:
אֲשֶׁר־י הַמְּחַכֶּה וַיִּגֵּעַ לְיָמִים אֶלֶף שְׁלֹשׁ מֵאוֹת שְׁלֹשִׁים וְחֲמֵשָׁה:

From the time the regular offering is abolished, and an appalling abomination is set up—it will be a thousand two hundred and ninety days. Happy the one who waits and reaches one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days.

DAN 12:11–12 NJPS

Verse 11 counts a specific number of days from the time of the cessation of the daily offering and the erection of the “appalling abomination” and is presented as a further clarification of the response (12:7) to the question posed just a few verses earlier (12:6). Since we have the beginning and endpoint of this period, and the total number of days included, we can, therefore, calculate the number of years intended. Calculation according to either the lunisolar or solar calendars, both of which were employed by Jews in the second century BCE, lead to a “prediction” of almost precisely 3.5 years.⁵⁰

Here too, as in 9:27, the chronological datum in this verse is the result of inner-Danielic scribal exegesis, whereby 7:25 was interpreted in order to clarify the length of time during which the temple was profaned. This precise period of time is not based upon historical analysis or traditions, but is rather the result of a scholastic, hermeneutic investigation into the earlier Danielic passage. This insight offers an explanation as to the deviation between the length of the persecutions in 1 Maccabees and Daniel, and should obviate the (many) attempts to identify specific historical events that took place at the beginning and end of a 3.5-year (or 1,290 or 1,335 days) period, since these numbers are in fact unrelated to the historical reality. At the same time, it seems safe to postulate that these verses were composed after the events in question took place, when there was no risk of having the prediction proven wrong.⁵¹

⁵⁰ See Segal, “Calculating the End,” 294–96.

⁵¹ Contra the many scholars who assume that 12:12 “updates” the prediction in 12:11 that did not come to fruition. If 12:12 was intended as an extension to the original predictive prophecy, then adding only forty-five days would be a very risky proposition. I plan to address the significance of this forty-five day difference in a subsequent publication.

6.3 *Daniel 8:13–14*

In the final verses under investigation here, there is an explicit heavenly question and answer about the length of time for the cessation of the daily offering:

וְאִשְׁמֶה אֶחָד־קָדוֹשׁ מְדַבֵּר וַיֹּאמֶר אֶחָד קָדוֹשׁ לְפִלְמוֹנֵי הַמְדַבֵּר עַד־מָתִי הֶחֱזוֹן הַתְּמִיד
וְהַפְּשַׁע שְׁמֵם תֵּת וְקֹדֶשׁ וְצָבָא מְרֻמָּס: וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי עַד עֶרֶב בִּקְרֵי אֲלֵפִים וּשְׁלֹשׁ מֵאוֹת
וְנִצְדָק קֹדֶשׁ:

Then I heard a holy being speaking, and another holy being said to whoever it was who was speaking, “How long will [what was seen in] the vision last—the regular offering be forsaken because of transgression; the sanctuary be surrendered and the [heavenly] host be trampled?” He answered me, “For twenty-three hundred evenings and mornings; then the sanctuary shall be cleansed”.

DAN 8:13–14 NJPS

As has been noted by many commentators, the verses refer to the תְּמִיד, the daily offering, offered twice daily, in the morning and in the evening (Exod 29:38–39; Num 28:3–4). Therefore, the number explicitly noted here, 2,300, refers to the total number of offerings, which should be double the number of days.⁵² According to this calculation, the number of days during which the daily offering was forsaken was 1,150 (2,300/2). This period is less than the 3.5 years of 12:11, but more than the 3 years of 1 Maccabees. Due to the discrepancy with 1 Maccabees, Collins concluded that “the prediction, then, cannot be after the fact and must have been composed before the actual rededication of the temple.”⁵³ Due to the seeming discrepancy with the 3.5-years tradition (which Collins identifies in 7:25 as well), he suggests that Daniel 8 was composed a short while after Daniel 7, and thus it starts its count from a later point.

52 Montgomery, *Daniel*, 242–43; Hartman and Di Lella, *Daniel*, 227; Lacocque, *Daniel*, 164; Collins, *Daniel*, 336; Newsom, *Daniel*, 267. In contrast, Goldingay, *Daniel*, 213; Seow, *Daniel*, 125, understand “evening and morning” as a reference to a complete day (in light of Genesis 1) and, therefore, view the period as 2,300 days. This reading is already attested in antiquity, and both OG and Theod have an additional word ἡμέραι (“days”) prior to the number 2,300. Seow, therefore, begins the count in 171 BCE from the time of the murder of Onias III (a possibility also suggested by Goldingay). Goldingay also posits that the period of 2,300 days is a “fixed ‘significant’ period” that reflected a complete unit of time.

53 Collins, *Daniel*, 336; similarly Bevan, *Daniel*, 127–28; and Newsom, *Daniel*, 267. Lacocque, *Daniel*, 250, describes 8:14 as “an exact calculation ... of the period during which the cultus was interrupted in Jerusalem (Autumn 167 to 14 December, 164),” although he does not demonstrate how this is possible mathematically.

In contrast, in light of the analysis above, I suggest that 8:13–14 should be read as an *interpretation* of 7:25, since the latter in its original context did not refer to a specific time. As has been noted by many scholars, and can be demonstrated by the use of common language and motifs, the author of Daniel 8 is aware of and even reuses material from Daniel 7 throughout the chapter (e.g., the motif of the horn battling against the heavenly forces).⁵⁴ Thus it seems likely that he knew of the expression עֵדֶן וּפְלֶגַע עֵדֶן (1) from 7:25.

With this in mind, how does Dan 8:13–14 function as an interpretation of 7:25? I previously suggested that 8:13–14 is an attempt to bridge the chronological data found in Daniel (3.5 years) with that reflected in 1 Maccabees (three years), while interpreting the expression פְּלֶגַע עֵדֶן of 7:25 as “part of a year.”⁵⁵ In a future study, I will suggest a new approach—2,300 indeed refers to the number of *tamid* offerings. However, a specific reading of the biblical laws in Leviticus 23 and Numbers 28–29 regarding the daily service, attested perhaps in the laws of the Damascus Document, allows for the possibility that they were not offered on sabbaths and festivals. When these days are discounted, then 2,300 *tamid* offerings can be mapped onto a period of 3.5 years, found elsewhere in the Danielic apocalypses, in 9:27 and 12:11–12.⁵⁶

The use of specific, definite chronological details in these passages demonstrates that they were composed following the end of the Antiochian decrees. This chronological insight also corresponds to the culmination of each of the apocalypses. In the case of the four kingdoms is chapters 2 and 7, the final stage, at the eschaton, is followed by a radical geopolitical transformation of the world order. Similarly, 11:40–12:4 describes Antiochus’s predicted demise “between the sea the beautiful holy mountain” and ultimate judgment for the universe, as is common in eschatological compositions.⁵⁷ In contrast, the apocalypses in chapters 8 and 9, do not describe a major transformation of the world order or general judgment, but rather, both describe the eventual demise of the persecuting king:

54 So e.g., Hartman and Di Lella, *Daniel*, 230; Collins, *Daniel*, 342; and Kratz, “Visions of Daniel,” 99–105.

55 See the calculations for both calendars in Segal, “Calculating the End,” 291–94.

56 This was presented as a lecture at the IOSOT Aberdeen 2019 conference, and will be published in a future study.

57 See, e.g., the expression “the day/time of (great) judgment” in an eschatological context, in 1 En. 10:6, 12 (4QEn^b 1 iv, 11, in J. T. Milik, *The Books of Enoch: Aramaic Fragments of Qumrân Cave 4* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1976], 175), 14 (4QEn^c 1 v, 2 [ibid., 189]); 16:1; 22:4 (4QEn^e 1 xxii, 2–3 [ibid., 229]), 13 (4QEn^d 1 xi, 1 [ibid., 218]); Jub. 4:19; 5:10; 9:15; 10:17, 22; 22:21; 23:11; 24:30, 33.

By his cunning, he will use deceit successfully. He will make great plans, will destroy many, taking them unawares, and will rise up against the chief of chiefs, but will be broken, not by [human?] hands.

DAN 8:25 NJPS

During one week he will make a firm covenant with many. For half a week he will put a stop to the sacrifice and the meal offering. At their *corner* will be an appalling abomination until the decreed destruction will be poured down upon the appalling thing.

DAN 9:27 NJPS, revised

Both of these apocalypses describe supernatural interventions in order to overthrow the king and put an end to the desecration of the Temple. But this does not necessitate a dramatic, eschatological change in the world order.

The different nature of these apocalypses, chapters 2, 7, and 10–12 with an eschatological climax, and chapters 8 and 9 with a supernatural, yet historically bounded, end to the Antiochian persecutions, are a direct result of the dates of composition as outlined above. The former were composed during the height of the persecution; therefore, the authors could only imagine a distant salvation. The latter were composed following their completion. Although these later apocalyptic authors credited God for their salvation, they could conceive of this delivery in historical terms. The Danielic authors' chronological framework is, therefore, fundamentally bound up with their theological worldview, and in particular, their historical and eschatological perspective.

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Five Kingdoms, and Talking Beasts: Some Old Greek Variants in Relation to Daniel's Four Kingdoms

Ian Young

1 Different Directions in Hebrew Bible Textual Criticism

Textual criticism of the Hebrew Bible has often been conceived as having a narrow focus on evaluating variant readings in order to establish the earlier, or in fact, the original text of the Bible. However, current mainstream scholarship on the textual history of the Hebrew Bible has abandoned the claim that we are in a position to arrive at the original text of the Bible. For example, the standard handbook by Emanuel Tov states that “the textual evidence does not point to a single ‘original’ text, but a series of subsequent authoritative texts produced by the same or different authors ... the original text is far removed and can never be reconstructed.”¹

This does not mean that scholars have abandoned the quest to evaluate variant readings and to attempt to build a case for whether readings are earlier or later. But it means that they are much more aware that establishing what is an earlier reading is not necessarily the same thing as discovering the original reading. Study of the evidence has further demonstrated that a high percentage of variant readings are not due to “errors” as was common language in many older approaches to textual criticism. Instead, it is accepted that variants were often created intentionally, due to the different conception of books held in those ancient cultures.² First, evidence suggests that for ancient people, an “exact” copy of a text did not usually involve what we would describe as word for word accuracy, as long as what was understood to be the essential message was conveyed. This makes the concept of an original text even more problematic, since this mindset would not lead to even two contemporary “original”

1 Emanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, 3rd ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012), 167–68.

2 On what follows, see especially the work of Raymond F. Person, Jr., *The Deuteronomic History and the Book of Chronicles Scribal Works in an Oral World*, AIL 6 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2010), 41–68; Raymond F. Person, Jr., “Text Criticism as a Lens for Understanding the Transmission of Ancient Texts in Their Oral Environments,” in *Contextualizing Israel's Sacred Writings: Ancient Literacy, Orality, and Literary Production*, ed. Brian B. Schmidt, AIL 22 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2015), 197–215, with references to his other publications. See also Ian Young, “The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Bible: The View from Qumran Samuel,” *ABR* 62 (2014): 14–30.

copies of the same text being exactly alike. Second, as community literature, the books of the Hebrew Bible had a complex relationship with a larger oral tradition which dealt with the subjects in the written text. This interaction could lead to variant forms of the same story, psalm, etc., coming into written form,³ or lead to the common observation that ancient texts tend to grow over time, with the addition of extra material from the tradition finding itself included in written form.⁴

Greater awareness of the nature of ancient literature has led to a greater appreciation of the breadth of the textual tradition of each of the biblical books. If ancient compositions were by nature fluid, then the definition of a biblical book as “the original text” is impractical and probably misleading. Instead, a biblical composition like the Book of Daniel can be understood as the sum of the various different manuscripts that we happen to have, bearing in mind that there were likely a significant number of other different manuscripts in antiquity, now lost to us. This way of viewing a biblical book invites us to value all of the variant forms of the book and to use them as a way of discussing the broader tradition of the Book of Daniel.

In view of these considerations, recent scholarship has begun to see textual variants as important for other reasons than just as potential evidence of an earlier text or, indeed, the original text of a book.⁵ Textual critics are not just engaged in the business of sieving through the myriads of variants in the hope of discovering the one small gold nugget of the earliest recoverable text. They should, instead, be thought of as historians of the textual development of the biblical books. They can, for example, ask such important questions as how readers of these variant manuscripts might have understood the text of the Bible that they knew. Because the fact of the matter is, many or most ancient people, such as the New Testament writers, were actually reading *these* texts, not some scholarly reconstruction of an original text. In this case, textual

3 For example, the highly variant forms of Daniel 5. See Ian Young, “The Original Problem: The Old Greek and the Masoretic Text of Daniel Chapter 5,” in *Empirical Models Challenging Biblical Criticism*, ed. Raymond F. Person, Jr. and Robert Rezetko, AIL 25 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2016), 271–301.

4 See David M. Carr, *The Formation of the Hebrew Bible: A New Reconstruction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 99: “As a general rule, ancient scribes who were producing a new version of an ancient tradition ... either preserved it unchanged (aside from memory or graphic variants) or expanded it.” See also Juha Pakkala, *God’s Word Omitted: Omissions in the Transmission of the Hebrew Bible*, FRLANT 251 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013), 90: “It may be indisputable that under many, perhaps under most circumstances the texts mainly developed by way of expansions.”

5 See Ronald Hendel, *Steps to a New Edition of the Hebrew Bible*, TCSt 10 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2016), 327: “Deliberately composed variants, even if historically secondary, deserve to be objects of study, rather than textual debris consigned to the ‘prison house’ of the apparatus.”

criticism becomes part of the discussion of the reception history of the biblical books.

By allowing comparison and contrast of the different ways that a text could be constructed, furthermore, the use of variant texts as “comparative commentary” allows readers of all existing texts of a biblical book to see more clearly the ways in which each text constructs its message. By studying the different ways that Daniel texts, for example, are evidenced, the reader gains a clearer insight into the specific characteristics of each of them. One may ask the question of what difference it makes to have a Daniel text that says this rather than that? Another advantage is that witnesses are read for themselves, as well as evidence for possible earlier stages of the text. Thus, a comparative commentary is interested in the witnesses themselves, not just the often extremely complicated questions involved in evaluating potential earlier and later readings, and not only on the one reading judged the earliest one attested.

With these thoughts in mind, I would like to introduce some of the important variants relating to the four kingdoms in Daniel that the Old Greek (OG) text has when compared to the Masoretic Text (MT) which most readers are much more familiar with.

2 The Texts of Daniel

To simplify, the textual evidence for Daniel falls into two basic classes. On the one hand is the MT and those texts which have a close relationship with it, albeit with occasional significant variants, or a relatively large number of minor variants. This MT-related group includes the eight fragmentary Daniel manuscripts from the Qumran or Dead Sea Scrolls, dating to the second and first centuries BCE,⁶ as well as the Greek translation of Theodotion, perhaps from the first century BCE, the Syriac Peshitta, commonly dated in the second century BCE, and the Latin Vulgate from ca. 400 CE.⁷ On the other side to this

6 On accepting the arguments for a first century BCE deposit date for the Qumran scrolls, see Gregory L. Doudna, “Dating the Scroll Deposits of the Qumran Caves: A Question of Evidence,” in *The Caves of Qumran: Proceedings of the International Conference, Lugano 2014*, ed. Marcello Fidanzio, STDJ 118 (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 238–46, with the bibliography cited there.

7 For information on these texts, see Armin Lange, “Ancient Manuscript Evidence,” in *The Textual History of the Bible: The Hebrew Bible: Volume 1C Writings*, ed. Armin Lange and Emanuel Tov (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 528–32; D. Amara, “Septuagint,” in *The Textual History of the Bible: The Hebrew Bible: Volume 1C Writings*, ed. Armin Lange and Emanuel Tov (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 542–54; Richard A. Taylor, “Peshitta,” in *The Textual History of the Bible: The Hebrew Bible: Volume 1C Writings*, ed. Armin Lange and Emanuel Tov (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 558–61; Michael Graves, “Vulgate,” in *The Textual History of the Bible: The Hebrew Bible: Volume 1C Writings*, ed. Armin Lange and Emanuel Tov (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 568–71.

MT group is the fascinatingly variant text of Daniel reflected in another Greek translation, the Old Greek Daniel, usually considered to have been made as early as the second century BCE.⁸

We are fortunate to have the Old Greek translation of Daniel at all, since it was almost obliterated from the textual record by Theodotion. In fact there are only two major manuscript witnesses to it in Greek, with a host of minor witnesses to parts of it. These consist of, first of all, one pre-Hexaplaric witness, Papyrus 967, dated to the second or no later than the early-third century CE.⁹ In addition there are two closely related Hexaplaric witnesses, the Greek manuscript 88 (Codex Chisianus, dated to the 9th–11th centuries CE) and the Syro-Hexapla (Codex Ambrosianus, dated to the 8th–9th centuries CE; originally made 616–617 CE; henceforth Syh).¹⁰

It is necessary to stress the problems caused by this limited textual evidence for our knowledge of the shape of the OG translation as it was originally made and, therefore, also how this original OG related to its *Vorlage*. None of the few manuscripts we possess is a straightforward witness to the OG translation as it was originally made. Thus, although the relatively early Papyrus 967 is usually considered to be a much superior witness to the later 88-Syh, nevertheless, it contains evidence that it has also been corrupted in various ways. Problems of simple scribal error are more difficult to identify with such a slim textual base. Furthermore, all the witnesses to the OG have suffered from corruptions under the influence of the dominant Theodotion (MT) tradition.¹¹ Comparison of 967 with 88-Syh shows how often 88-Syh has been influenced by the MT tradition. Given our knowledge of the pressure to conform with the MT tradition, and the dominance of the Theodotion form of text, it seems most likely that when the two texts differ, one being in conformity with the MT/Theodotion, the other divergent with it, that it is the MT-like reading that is secondary.

8 Amara, "Septuagint," 543.

9 For a detailed introduction to papyrus 967 see Joseph Ziegler and Olivier Munnich, *Septuaginta: Vetus Testamentum Graecum Auctoritate Academiae Scientiarum Gottingensis editum XVI.2: Susanna Daniel Bel et Draco* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1999), 63–76. For recent introductions to the Greek versions of Daniel, see R. Timothy McLay, "Daniel (Old Greek and Theodotion)," in *The T&T Clark Companion to the Septuagint*, ed. James K. Aitken, Bloomsbury Companions (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2015), 544–54; and Amara, "Septuagint."

10 On 88-Syh, see Ziegler and Munnich, *Susanna Daniel Bel et Draco*, 22–50.

11 Timothy McLay, *The OG and Th Versions of Daniel*, SCS 43 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996), 14, 109, 214–15, 242; Ziegler and Munnich, *Susanna Daniel Bel et Draco*, 76; Olivier Munnich, "Texte massorétique et Septante dans le livre de Daniel," in *The Earliest Text Of The Hebrew Bible: The Relationship Between the Masoretic Text and the Hebrew Base of the Septuagint Reconsidered*, ed. Adrian Schenker, SCS 52 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2003), 93–120 (esp. 94–95).

Therefore, the likely direction of corruption seems clear. However, comparison of 967 with 88-Syh and other witnesses also shows that already 967 has been subject to corruption toward the MT/Theodotion.¹² Our “best” witness for OG Daniel is still far from simply a representation of the translation as it was first made. Nevertheless, it is these manuscripts that ancient readers were actually reading.

The issues with the mixed OG-Theodotion nature of our manuscript witnesses, plus the fact that in a significant number of cases the OG is not a word for word translation of its *Vorlage*, means that it is quite a challenge to interpret the evidence that OG Daniel provides for its Semitic language *Vorlage*. Nevertheless, it is well worth attempting to investigate the OG’s *Vorlage* since it is a very interesting variant text of Daniel, one that is definitely under-utilized by Daniel scholars. Furthermore, once we realize that textual criticism is about more than just attempting to work out which of the variant readings is the earliest attested, we can pay attention to all the variant forms of Daniel separate from the quest for a potentially variant *Vorlage*. From this point of view it does not matter whether we consider the readings as earlier, or as created by processes such as assimilation to the MT/Theodotion tradition. The focus is on the evidence the manuscripts provide for the broader tradition of the book of Daniel. The OG witnesses evidence an often dramatically different text of Daniel. This is especially the case in chapters 4, 5, and 6, with, for example, Daniel 5 differing from the MT in length (it is much shorter), characterization, and key plot elements.¹³ But there are significant variants in every single chapter of OG Daniel; in fact, in almost every single verse.¹⁴

3 Five Kingdoms in OG Daniel 2

Here is a comparison of the evidence of the major OG manuscripts with the MT in Dan 2:39–41.¹⁵ There are many interesting variants between the OG and MT but several in Dan 2:39–41 relate to the count of kingdoms. We pick up just

12 See McLay, *OG and Th Versions of Daniel*, 214–15: “It is also obvious that corruption of OG MSS towards Th and MT is not limited to 88-Syh, but includes 967, our best representative of OG.”

13 See the two texts set out in parallel in Young, “The Original Problem,” 273–83.

14 See Ian Young, “What is Old Greek Daniel Chapter 8 About?” *JSOT* 44 (2020): 693–710 on Daniel 8 as having a quite different storyline in the OG compared to the MT.

15 The translation of the Greek is based on Timothy McLay, “Daniel,” in *A New English Translation of the Septuagint*, ed. Albert Pietersma and Benjamin G. Wright (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 991–1022, with occasional adjustments to more clearly indicate certain features of the OG text in comparison with the MT. The translation of the MT is mine, with the aim of facilitating comparison of the texts.

after the moment that Daniel has identified the head of gold of the statue in the vision that King Nebuchadnezzar saw as Nebuchadnezzar and his kingdom. The numbers in the OG Ziegler Munnich column give the numbers of the kingdoms in the OG, showing that we come to five. In contrast, the numbering of the third and fourth kingdoms in the MT leaves no doubt that we are talking about only four kingdoms.

	OG Ziegler Munnich ¹⁶	MT	Variants ¹⁷
39.	<p>And after (1) you will rise (2) a kingdom smaller than yours ...</p> <p>OG: και μετὰ σὲ στήσεται βασιλεία ἐλάττων σου ... and (3) another kingdom of bronze, which will rule over the whole earth,...</p> <p>OG: και βασιλεία ἑτέρα χαλκοῦ, ἣ κυριεύσει πάσης τῆς γῆς</p>	<p>And after you will arise another kingdom, inferior to you ...</p> <p>MT:¹⁸ וּבְתַרְדּוֹת יְקוּמִים מְלָכֹוּ אֲחֵרֵי אֶרֶץ מִנְּךָ ... and another, third kingdom of bronze which will rule over all the earth.</p> <p>MT: וּמְלָכֹוּ תְלִיחָאָה אֲחֵרֵי דֵי בְּכַל-אַרְעָא נְחֹשֶׁא דֵי תְשַׁלֵּט בְּכָל-אַרְעָא</p>	<p>MT + another (= 967 [αλλη]).</p> <p>MT + third (= 967, 88-Syh [τρίτη βασιλεία]).</p>
40.	<p>... and (4) another kingdom, strong as iron,...</p> <p>OG: και ἑτέρα βασιλεία ἰσχυρὰ ὥσπερ ὁ σίδηρος</p> <p>... which saws everything and cuts down every tree, ...</p> <p>OG: ὁ πρίζων πάντα και πᾶν δένδρον ἐκκόπτων</p>	<p>And there will be a fourth kingdom, strong as iron ...</p> <p>MT: וּמְלָכֹוּ רַב־יַעֲאָה תְהוּא תְקִיפָה בְּפָרְזֻלָּא ... because iron crushes and shatters everything ...</p> <p>MT: בְּלִ-קָבֵל דֵי פְרֻזְלָא מְהֵדֵק וְחֹשֶׁל בְּלָא</p>	<p>OG (967): Another // MT: fourth (= 88-Syh).</p> <p>OG: which // MT: because iron.</p> <p>OG (967): saws everything // OG (88-Syh): overpowers (δαμάζων) everything // MT: crushes.</p> <p>OG: Cuts down every tree // MT: shatters.</p>

16 The critical text of Ziegler and Munnich, *Susanna Daniel Bel et Draco*. We note the complexity of the textual evidence provided by the witnesses to the OG in the variants column and below.

17 All variants from the MT are noted here, as well as significant inner-Greek variants that will be discussed below.

18 Where the MT contains a *Qere/Ketiv* variant, only the *Qere* is presented here, since none of them are relevant to the current discussion.

	... and the whole earth will be shaken. OG: καὶ σεισθήσεται πᾶσα ἡ γῆ	... and like iron which smashes it will crush and smash all these. MT: וּבִפְרֻזָּא דִּי-מְרַעַע בְּלֵא־לִיזַן תִּדְק וְתַרְעַ	Totally variant. ¹⁹
41.	And as you saw its feet partly of iron and partly of potter's ware:... OG: καὶ ὡς ἑώρακας τοὺς πόδας αὐτῆς μέρος μὲν τι σιδήρου μέρος δὲ τι ὀστράκου κεραμικοῦ ... there will be (5) another, divided kingdom,...	And as you saw the feet and toes were partly of potters' clay and partly of iron ... MT: וְדִי-חֻזְיָתָהּ רַגְלֵיהָ וְאַצְבָּעֶתָּא מִנְהִין חֶסֶף דִּי-פְהָר וּמִנְהִין פְּרֻזַּל ... it will be a divided kingdom ... MT: מְלֻכוֹ פְּלִיגָה תְּהִיָּהּ	OG + its (feet). MT + toes. OG (967): iron ... potter's ware // MT: potter's clay ... iron (= 88-Syh [ὀστράκου κεραμικοῦ ... σιδήρου]) OG + another.
	... and some of the iron base (root) will be in it;... OG: καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς σιδηρᾶς ῥίζης ἔσται ἐν αὐτῇ	... but some of the firmness of iron will be in it ... OG: וּמִן-נִצְבָּתָא דִּי פְּרֻזָּא לְהוּא־בְּהָ	88: all minus
	... just as you saw the iron commixed with the clay ware,...	... because as you saw iron is mixed with the miry clay. MT: בְּלֵ-קֶבֶל דִּי חֻזְיָתָהּ פְּרֻזָּא מְעָרַב בְּחֶסֶף טִינָא	
	OG: καθάπερ εἶδες τὸν σίδηρον ἀναμειγμένον τῷ πηλίνῳ ὀστράκῳ		

The MT has a series of kingdoms, with the last two clearly numbered three and four. The description of the fourth kingdom is quite complex (carrying on for two more verses after the segment presented above), leading to suggestions of later reworking. Comparison with the lack of “toes” in the OG in verses 41a and

19 The relationship between the versions is actually more complex here than this presentation would imply, but that discussion is beyond our interest here. For example, it is suggested that there is a relationship between MT אֵלֵין “these” and OG δένδρον “tree” (Aramaic לְאֵ) of the previous clause, see R. H. Charles, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1929), 48; John J. Collins, *A Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), 151 n. 101.

42a has, for example, led to a widespread belief that they are a later addition to the MT.²⁰

Our interest here, however, is on a major variant that is less often noted. This is the fact that the OG seems to have five kingdoms. Kingdom 1, in verse 39, is the Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar, designated as “you.” Also in verse 39 we have kingdom 2, signified as “will rise a kingdom smaller than yours,” then kingdom 3, “another kingdom of bronze.” Then, in verse 40, we have kingdom 4, “another kingdom, strong as iron.” These four kingdoms correspond to the four kingdoms of the MT, but a noteworthy point that we will return to about the OG, is the question of the lack of numbering of these kingdoms. The major difference in the count comes in verse 41. Here, the MT continues talking about its fourth kingdom: “And as you saw the feet and toes were partly of potters’ clay and partly of iron, it will be a divided kingdom.” However, the OG here brings in its fifth kingdom, stating: “And as you saw its feet partly of iron and partly of potter’s ware: there will be another kingdom in two parts.”

As is usual with the witnesses to the OG the textual evidence is more complex than a casual perusal of the Göttingen critical text or the NETS translation based on it would suggest. We have already mentioned that one of the major issues in the transmission of the OG was the constant pressure to conform the text to the MT tradition most often reflected in the dominant Theodotion text of Daniel. This affects the text of the passages relevant to the current discussion in a couple of ways. The Göttingen critical text’s reading for the fourth kingdom in verse 40, “another kingdom, strong as iron,” is based on Papyrus 967.²¹ The other major Greek witness, manuscript 88, reads instead “a fourth kingdom, strong as iron.”²² Since this reading conforms to the MT/Theodotion (βασιλεία τετάρτη), it is reasonable to suggest that it is a later development of the OG text, to bring it more in line with this tradition. As discussed above, however, the decision that this reading is secondary should not be the last that is said about it. It is still important to ask the question what those real life readers who read this actual manuscript would have made out of this version of the text. In fact,

20 See Louis F. Hartman and Alexander A. Di Lella, *The Book of Daniel: A New Translation with Notes and Commentary*, AB 23 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1978), 141, 148–49; Michael Segal, *Dreams, Riddles, and Visions: Textual, Contextual, and Intertextual Approaches to the Book of Daniel*, BZAW 455 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2016), 52 n. 65.

21 Winfried Hamm, *Der Septuaginta-Text des Buches Daniel Kap. 1–2 nach dem Kölner Teil des Papyrus 967*, PTA 10 (Bonn: Rudolf Habelt, 1969), 255, also considers that 967 is likely to reflect the original OG text.

22 So too the citation by Victorinus of Pettau in his commentary on Revelation “quartum autem regnum.” See the tabulation of the various witnesses to this phrase in Hamm, *Der Septuaginta-Text des Buches Daniel Kap. 1–2*, 253.

it seems likely that the numbering of the fourth kingdom would have made even more obvious the fact that the “another kingdom” of the following verse must be a plus one to kingdom four, meaning a fifth kingdom.

A similar, but more acute, textual problem is posed by the third kingdom in verse 39. Here *both* 967 and 88-Syh read, like MT, “and another, third kingdom” (καὶ τρίτη βασιλεία ἄλλη [967: ετερρα]).²³ However, Munnich, the editor of the critical text, has conjectured that even though attested by all of our (few) witnesses, it too is due to the influence of the MT/Theodotion tradition.²⁴ This leads to a text that is consistent in introducing each of kingdoms three, four and five as “another kingdom,” without any of them being numbered.²⁵ If he is right, and the logic is reasonable, we have further evidence of the influence that the MT’s four kingdom schema, with its numbered kingdoms, had on the development of the OG text.

The OG text reaches five kingdoms by having two final kingdoms (before the kingdom of God) rather than the one of the MT. The distinction made would be between Alexander’s original kingdom, “strong as iron, which saws everything and cuts down every tree, and the whole earth will be shaken,” and what follows. This is a good picture of the irresistible nature of Alexander’s conquest, for which see also Dan 8:5–7. Just as in Dan 8:8, the vision goes on to describe the break-up of Alexander’s kingdom by talking of the divided nature of the kingdom in the phrase “there will be another kingdom in two parts.” Given the early date of the OG text, these two kingdoms would presumably be intended to be the Ptolemaic and Seleucid, and the OG is making clear that these were different kingdoms to Alexander’s, with their own characteristics.²⁶

When discussing the kingdoms of Daniel chapter 2, scholars routinely talk about the four kingdoms of the MT, and the obvious connection with Daniel 7 is made, with its four kingdoms. It is commonly pictured that the influence ran from Daniel 2, an earlier text, to Daniel 7, which drew on the picture of the four

23 Cf. Victorinus who has “tertium regnum,” not reflecting “another” (cf., Theodotion, mentioned below). See the tabulation of the witnesses in Hamm, *Der Septuaginta-Text des Buches Daniel Kap. 1–2*, 253.

24 Ziegler and Munnich, *Susanna Daniel Bel et Draco*, 86, 254. Note that Theodotion varies from the MT here in having only “a third kingdom” without “another.” In contrast to Munnich, Hamm (*Der Septuaginta-Text des Buches Daniel Kap. 1–2*, 253) suggests that 967 probably reflects the genuine OG text.

25 Cf. kingdom 2 in the MT and in 967 “another kingdom.” Ziegler and Munnich (*Susanna Daniel Bel et Draco*, 254) follow 88-Syh with “a kingdom smaller than yours” (NETS translation, based on the reading βασιλεία ἐλάττων σου).

26 So already G. Jahn, *Das Buch Daniel nach der Septuaginta hergestellt: Übersetzt und kritisch erklärt* (Leipzig: Pfeiffer, 1904), 23: “Nach LXX is das geteilte Reich ein anderes als das Alexanders, entsprechend der Geschichte.”

kingdoms in Daniel 2 to create its own picture.²⁷ However, another scenario could conceivably explain the relationship between these two chapters, one that runs the other way, from Daniel 7 to Daniel 2. Although such connections are a feature of the OG as well, it seems to be an especial feature of the MT that it is a more edited, more finished text than the OG, making more connections between different chapters. An obvious and well accepted example is how MT Dan 5:18–22, minus in the OG, summarizes the story of Daniel 4 to help draw these two chapters even closer together.²⁸ An alternate scenario for the text history of Daniel 2 and 7, therefore, is that originally Daniel 2 did not clearly reflect the four kingdom scheme of Daniel 7. It was only subsequently, under the influence of the later chapter, that Daniel 2 was re-edited as in the MT, in order to arrive at a clear, numbered sequence of four kingdoms.²⁹ According to this theory, the earlier text, better preserved by the OG, simply followed the

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- 27 See standard references like Collins, *Daniel*, 294–99, esp. 294: “there is continuity, which indicates that the author of chap. 7 deliberately connected his vision with the older tales. The most obvious points of continuity are with the four-kingdom schema of chap. 2...” See also Carol A. Newsom with Brennan W. Breed, *Daniel: A Commentary*, OTL (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2014), 218: “Obviously, the author of Dan 7 draws explicitly on the schema from ch. 2 of four Gentile kingdoms succeeded by a fifth kingdom that manifests divine sovereignty.” James A. Montgomery (*A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, ICC [Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1927], 175) is one of the few scholars who attempts to account for the OG’s five kingdoms while holding to the theory that the four kingdoms schema is original in Daniel 2. He suggests (if I understand his brief note correctly) that it arose due to the fact that “another” was omitted in OG by accident in verse 39, and that a marginal note to that effect was accidentally incorporated into verse 41. This is a more complicated theory than the one suggested below, but of course, not impossible.
- 28 See Collins, *Daniel*, 242. Some other possible examples suggested by scholars include: the failure of the Babylonian wise men and the introduction of Daniel in MT Dan 4:3–6, minus in OG, as a way of bringing this chapter more in line with Daniel 2 and 5 (e.g., Collins, *Daniel*, 220); the two tasks of reading and interpreting the writing on the wall in MT Daniel 5 against the one task of rendering the interpretation in OG to conform the story more closely with Daniel 2 (tell the dream and the interpretation) (e.g., Munnich, “Le Livre de *Daniel*,” 111–12); and the small horn of MT Dan 8:9 against the OG’s strong horn as a way of linking more closely with the small horn of Dan 7:8 (Segal, *Dreams, Riddles, and Visions*, 212–13 n. 38).
- 29 For various suggestions about the influence of Daniel 7’s four kingdom scheme on the redaction of Daniel 2, see Pablo S. David, “The Composition and Structure of the Book of Daniel: A Synchronic and Diachronic Reading” (PhD diss., Katholieke Universiteit, Leuven, 1991), 123–36; Reinhard G. Kratz, *Translatio Imperii: Untersuchungen zu den aramäischen Danielerzählungen und ihrem theologiegeschichtlichen Umfeld*, WMANT 63 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchner Verlag, 1991), 48–70; cf., Timothy McLay, “The Old Greek Translation of Daniel IV–VI and the Formation of the Book of Daniel,” *VT* 55 (2005): 304–23, esp. 319. These theories are generally based on literary grounds (e.g., the five part nature of the statue in the vision), not on the OG text.

historical sequence of the kingdoms that were of interest, without such a strong interest in a schematization of history as reflected by the four kingdom model. The MT's new edition of Daniel 2 would, therefore, be a very early example of the influence of the four kingdom schema on the understanding of biblical traditions. This alternative model of the textual development of Daniel 2, and the evidence for it provided by the OG text, deserves more attention in scholarship on the development of the idea of the four kingdoms.

4 Different Beasts in Daniel 7

While the scheme of four beasts in OG Daniel 7 is the same as in the MT, the characteristics of the beasts in each text are different. There is a detectable tendency of the OG to increase the human features of the first three beasts,³⁰ which makes an even greater contrast with the terrifying fourth beast.

4.1 *The First Beast*

The MT of Dan 7:4 says concerning the first beast: "The first was like a lion and had wings of an eagle. I was watching until its wings were plucked off and it was lifted from the ground and made to stand on two feet like a man and a heart of a man was given to it." This description of the beast already includes several human features. In addition, there is the following OG variant:

MT

... and it was lifted from the ground and made to stand on two feet like a man ...

MT: וְנִטְּלָהּ מִן־הָאָרֶץ וְעָלְ-רַגְלֶיהָ כְּאָדָם
הַקִּימָהּ

OG³¹

... and it was lifted from the ground and was set upon human feet ...

OG: καὶ ἤρθη ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς καὶ ἐπὶ ποδῶν
ἀνθρώπων ἐστάθη

Rather than the MT's "made to stand on two feet *like* a man," the OG simply states that the beast was made to stand on human feet. This wording strengthens the statement in this verse about how the beast is "humanized." They are actually human feet, not just like them.

³⁰ As noted already by T. J. Meadowcroft, *Aramaic Daniel and Greek Daniel: A Literary Comparison*, JSOTSup 198 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 221.

³¹ The OG here is again the critical text of Ziegler and Munnich, *Susanna Daniel Bel et Draco*. OG variants are only noted when they are directly relevant to the current discussion.

4.2 *The Second Beast*

The MT describes the second beast as follows: “And behold another beast, a second one, like a bear. It was raised up on one side and it had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. And thus they said (it was said) to it: ‘Arise and eat much flesh!’” The OG includes the following interesting variant:

MT

And thus they said (it was said) to it: “Arise and eat much flesh!”

MT: וְכֵן אָמְרִין לָהּ קוּמִי אֲכָלִי בְּשָׂר שְׂגִיָּא

OG

And thus it said, “Rise, devour much flesh!”

OG: καὶ οὕτως εἶπεν Ἀνάστα κατάφαγε σάρκα πολλὰς

Against the MT, where the beast is addressed, and told to attack, the OG has the beast itself speaking, which adds a human trait to it. Even so, the beast is pictured as being even more aggressive of its own nature, as it seems to be rousing itself up to attack and eat its victims. In the MT, only the fourth beast and the one like a human are depicted as the subject of active verbs. The OG lacks the dimension of divine authorization which seems to be implied by the beast being addressed and told to eat much flesh. Instead, its actions are portrayed as due to human-like deliberation and choice, not mere animal instinct.

4.3 *The Third Beast*

The MT says of the third beast: “After this I looked and behold another, like a leopard, and it had four wings of a bird upon its sides and the beast had four heads and authority was given to it.” The OG has the interesting variant:

MT

... and authority was given to it.

MT: וְשִׁלְטָן יְהִיב לָהּ

OG

... and language was given to it.

OG: καὶ γλῶσσα ἐδόθη αὐτῷ

Variants

MT: authority// OG (967, Syh): language// 88 minus of “and

language was given to it”

The OG, as represented by 967 and Syh, reads instead of the MT’s “authority” (שִׁלְטָן) “and language (Aramaic *Vorlage*: לְשׁוֹן) was given to it.”³² This is an example where there is a graphical similarity between variants in the MT and the

32 The objection of Sharon Pace Jeansonne (*The Old Greek Translation of Daniel 7–12*, CBQMS 19 [Washington: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1988], 119) that a tongue could also belong to an animal, and that it does not necessarily indicate speech is weakened by the fact that in Daniel “tongue” always refers to language. See Dan 1:4, the “language” of the Chaldeans and the repeated “peoples, nations and languages” in Dan 3:4, 7, 29 (singular), 31; 5:19; 6:26; 7:14.

Vorlage of the OG, here involving metathesis of the first two letters and the MT having an extra *tet*. Pace Jeansonne declares this to be a “simple metathesis,”³³ but it seems a rather complicated error, involving not only metathesis, but also an additional letter in the MT.³⁴ Thus it seems better to take it as some sort of conscious substitution of terms, albeit perhaps influenced by some sort of verbal play of similar sounds. This could be due to the OG translator, his *Vorlage*, or by the MT tradition. In favor of the secondary nature of the MT might be that, on consideration, it is strange that it is mentioned that this beast is granted authority. Presumably all the beasts have authority, since they all represent kingdoms. Scholars explain the MT’s explicit mention of “authority” as due to making a link with the dream in chapter 2 where it is said that the third kingdom “shall rule over all the earth” (Dan 2:39), and hence the authority of the third beast is explicitly noted in this chapter.³⁵ The MT reading could then be explained as another case of it secondarily making closer links between chapters.

Even if we decide that the OG reading is secondary, it is important to remember that it was this text, not another, that was read by many readers of Daniel in the ancient world. Thus, Beale considers the OG reading to lie behind Rev 13:5, where the beast from the sea, an amalgam of the beasts of Daniel 7, “was given a mouth” (Καὶ ἐδόθη αὐτῷ στόμα).³⁶

Against these other witnesses, OG manuscript 88 has a minus of this phrase “and language was given to it.” This is considered to have been left out by error, and is present in Syh as well as 967.³⁷ This is not the end of the discussion, however, since this secondary reading was present in at least this one text, and one may ask the question what a reader of this text would have made of it. In contrast to the other texts of Daniel 7, in 88 neither language nor authority is given to this beast. It is simply a beast. The third beast gets very little space in this chapter in every witness. The absence of these distinguishing features in 88 would have made it pass even more quickly in the succession of kingdoms leading to the terrible fourth kingdom.

33 Pace Jeansonne, *The Old Greek Translation of Daniel 7–12*, 119.

34 Meadowcroft (*Aramaic Daniel and Greek Daniel*, 221 n. 61) points out that no evidence is provided of another similar case of metathesis.

35 See Montgomery, *Daniel*, 290; Collins, *Daniel*, 298; and Newsom, *Daniel*, 224.

36 G. K. Beale, “A Reconsideration of the Text of Daniel in the Apocalypse,” *Bib 67* (1986): 539–43 (esp. 542). For the beast in Revelation 13 as an amalgam of the four beasts in Daniel 7, see G. K. Beale, *The Book of Revelation: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 685.

37 Angelo Geissen, *Der Septuaginta-Text des Buches Daniel, Kap. 5–12, zusammen mit Susanna, Bel et Draco, sowie Esther, Kap. 1, 1a–2, 15 nach dem Kölner Teil des Papyrus 967*, PTA 5 (Bonn: Habelt, 1968), 37, 101.

4.4 *The Fourth Beast*

There is no trace of humanization in either the MT or the OG in the description of the fourth beast which is, in the MT, described as “a fourth beast, dreadful and fearful and exceedingly strong. And it had great teeth of iron; it devoured and crushed and the remains it stamped with its feet. And it was different to all the beasts who were before it and it had ten horns.” The one important variant to mention in the OG is that instead of “it was different to all the beasts,” the OG has *διαφόρως χρώμενον*, which NETS translates as “it behaved differently.”³⁸ The MT seems to emphasize the essentially different nature of the fourth beast, while the OG seems to focus on the way the beast acts. For the OG, it is yet another beast, not in essence different to the others, yet it does not behave in the same manner as those that have gone before.³⁹

The positive aspects of divine authorization or humanization in the MT are taken to create a greater contrast with the fourth beast.⁴⁰ In the OG, all the first three beasts have human characteristics. The OG reflects a text where the first three beasts share this similarity to each other, and this highlights the contrast with the completely inhuman fourth beast more sharply. Nevertheless, the first three beasts are not said to be essentially different to the fourth beast. In contrast, in the MT, the beasts are more bestial, especially after the first one, and yet the fourth beast is even of a different nature to them. This is a good example where comparing the different texts helps brings out the particular emphases of each.

5 Conclusion

In these case studies, we have demonstrated that taking the OG text of Daniel into account has several benefits for the scholar of the Daniel tradition. First, the OG can evidence earlier stages in the composition of the book of Daniel than the MT. However, beyond the possibility of discovering an earlier reading than the MT, which is what has commonly been the focus in textual criticism, consideration of OG variants, whether they are judged earlier or later than the MT, or simply that they represent parallel developments of the Daniel tradition, has further benefits. Thus, second, the OG variants provide further evidence of the way the Daniel tradition developed in antiquity. Third, by

38 See T. Muraoka, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint* (Leuven: Peeters, 2009), 735, §11, 1c.

39 Cf. Meadowcroft, *Aramaic Daniel and Greek Daniel*, 221.

40 Newsom, *Daniel*, 223.

providing an example of a different way that a Daniel text can be presented, they lead us to see more clearly the specific emphases of each text. Fourth, these alternative texts of Daniel were actually the ones used by ancient readers of Daniel, and thus we can attempt to understand what they conveyed to these earlier readers of the book, the ones who continued to value and develop the idea of the four kingdoms.

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The Four (Animal) Kingdoms: Understanding Empires as Beastly Bodies

Alexandria Frisch

1 Daniel and Imperial Bodies

Put simply, Daniel is a book of empires.¹ The first half of the book (chapters 1–6) contains six stories that advocate cooperating with foreign kings as Daniel achieves success in an imperial world.² In contrast, the second half of the book (chapters 7–12) details apocalyptic visions, which, in large part, center around the end of empires and their replacement with a divine kingdom. Post-biblical interpreters recognized the imperial focus of the book and similarly used Daniel—whether it be with implicit allusions, explicit references, or entirely rewritten passages—when they wanted to say something, even tangentially, about empires. This deployment of the book of Daniel and its motifs became what I have termed elsewhere as the “Danielic discourse.”³

An important part of this discourse was the four kingdoms motif, which was a larger Near Eastern motif depicting a series of empires and which was originally distinct from Daniel. In Daniel, both the narrative and the apocalyptic imagery incorporate a series of empires. The royal court shifts from that of the Babylonians (Daniel 1–5) to Darius the Mede’s (Dan 5:31) and then, finally, to Cyrus the Persian’s (Dan 6:28). The same three imperial settings repeat in Daniel 7–12.⁴ Beyond the historical setting of the chapters, there are visions in Daniel 2 and 7 that portray a four-part imperial series consisting of Babylonia, Media, Persia, and Greece. Daniel 2 does so with a human-like statue and

1 This is markedly different from most biblical books, which “focus on the behavior and destiny of Israel as the elect nation or on its pious members” (Klaus Koch, “Stages in the Canonization of the Book of Daniel,” in *The Book of Daniel: Composition and Reception*, ed. John J. Collins and Peter W. Flint, VTSup 83 [Leiden: Brill, 2001], 422).

2 See John J. Collins, *A Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), 51; and W. Lee Humphreys, “A Life-Style for Diaspora: A Study of the Tales of Esther and Daniel,” *JBL* 92 (1973): 211–23.

3 Alexandria Frisch, *The Danielic Discourse on Empire in Second Temple Literature*, JSJS 176 (Leiden: Brill, 2017).

4 Daniel 7–8 includes Babylonian kings, Daniel 9 focuses on Darius the Mede, and Daniel 10–12 returns to Cyrus the Persian. There is also the explicit reference to the “prince of Greece” in Dan 10:20.

Daniel 7 with four ferocious beasts.⁵ In both chapters, the series is inherently anti-imperial as it envisions the end of the final, Greek empire and its replacement with a fifth, divine kingdom. The final redactions of both chapters appear to be reactions to the unstable political situation in Judea prior to the Maccabean Revolt.⁶

As much as Daniel is a book of empires, however, it is also a book of bodies. The four kingdoms are depicted as bodies—human and animal. This is not a coincidence. In the very first chapter, we are introduced to Daniel and his friends with a focus on their bodies—they are “young men without physical defect and handsome” (Dan 1:4).⁷ We learn this even before we are told about their wisdom, even though it is wisdom that enables them to be successful in the foreign court (vv. 17–20). The rest of the story in Daniel 1 continues to concern itself with their bodies. Daniel and his friends eat only vegetables so as not to defile themselves with foreign food and, as a result, “they appeared better and fatter than all the young men” (v. 15). Bodies continue to dominate Daniel—in addition to human bodies forming the shape of statues (Daniel 2 and perhaps Daniel 3), human bodies miraculously survive execution (Daniel 3 and 6), and human bodies can be resurrected from the dead (Dan 12:2). Angelic bodies also appear alongside these human bodies. We read about their clothing

5 In Daniel 2, the statue's head of gold is identified as Nebuchadnezzar, the first kingdom (v. 38). The interpretation of the fourth part, the legs/feet, emphasizes its mixed nature (Dan 2:41–43). Most scholars see this as a reference to the dynastic Ptolemaic/Seleucid intermarriage between Antiochus II and Berenice in 252 BCE or that of Ptolemy Epiphanes and Cleopatra in 193 BCE (John J. Collins, *Daniel with an Introduction to Apocalyptic Literature* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984], 170). The order of Medes and Persians as the second and third kingdoms is supported by the sequence of kings in Daniel 6 and by their pairing in Dan 5:28. Furthermore, in Dan 8:3, the two-horned ram represents the kings of Media and Persia, with the latter appearing afterwards and larger. See Michael J. Gruenthaner, “The Four Empires of Daniel,” *CBQ* 8 (1946): 208–9. In order to identify the four beasts in Daniel 7, many scholars have drawn parallels between its animal imagery and animal imagery associated with these empires in extra-biblical sources throughout the ancient Near East. See, for example, Jürg Egger, *Influences and Traditions Underlying the Vision of Daniel 7:1–14: The Research History from the End of the 19th Century to the Present* (Fribourg: Fribourg University Press, 2000), 42–48.

6 The fourth beast of Daniel 7 contains details so specific that scholars have identified the historical setting of its writing as the persecution of the Jews by Antiochus Epiphanes (167 BCE). About the “little horn” in Dan 7:8, Collins writes, “Since the fourth beast has ten horns, a date before the third century is unlikely, and no Greek king before Antiochus Epiphanes is known to have inspired such antipathy among Jews. The identification of the ‘little horn’ with a ‘mouth speaking great things’ (7:8) as Epiphanes may be implied already in 1 Macc 1:24 (he ‘spoke with great arrogance’)” (*Daniel*, 80).

7 Biblical translations are from the NRSV.

(Dan 10:5, 12:6), the light streaming from their eyes and face (Dan 10:6), and how they look like men (Dan 3:5, 8:15).

It is the animal bodies, however, that are arguably the most distinctive and varied throughout the entire book as revealed by the following brief overview:

Daniel refuses to eat animals (1:8–17); there is an attempt to feed him to the animals (6:10–24); the king turns into an animal (4:28–37), and animals run amok in the final visions (7–12). The Greek version of Daniel, with its three additional chapters, returns to the animal; Daniel first uses an explosive pitch-laden brisket to slay a monstrous, fire-breathing dragon, before he (alas, again) survives a den of hungry lions (15:23–40).⁸

What is most remarkable about these animals is that they are always connected to imperial power. In fact, they become the actual embodiment of empire. Empires *are* animals. The same is true in post-biblical interpretations of Daniel as well as in other texts that are contemporaneous with Daniel. In particular, the four kingdoms motif is also reconfigured with animal imagery. This essay will argue that the beastly four kingdoms is itself its own discourse that evinces a specific outlook on empire.⁹

2 The Animal Turn

Before delving into the texts that envision the four kingdoms as animals, it behooves us to pause for a moment and make clear that there are other Second Temple texts that do not employ animalistic imagery for the kingdoms. The

8 Jennifer L. Koosed and Robert Paul Seesengood, “Daniel’s Animal Apocalypse” in *Divinanimality: Animal Theory, Creaturely Theology*, ed. Stephen D. Moore (New York: Fordham University Press, 2014), 183.

9 I use “discourse” here to mean speech and the ideas and philosophies propagated by that speech. Since we do not have the verbal speech of Second Temple period Jews, this is a discourse discernible in written texts. For this common-sense definition, see Teun A. van Dijk, “The Study of Discourse,” in *Discourse as Structure and Process*, ed. Teun A. van Dijk (London: Sage, 1997), 1. An early pioneer in the study of discourse, Michael Foucault himself admits that there are various definitions of discourse, one being: “an individualizable group of statements” (*Archaeology of Knowledge*, trans. A. M. Sheridan Smith [New York: Pantheon, 1972], 80). As interpreted by Sara Mills, this concept refers to “groups of utterances which seem to be regulated in some way and which seem to have a coherence and a force to them in common. Within this definition, therefore, it would be possible to talk about a discourse of femininity, a discourse of imperialism, and so on” (*Discourse* [London: Routledge, 1997], 7).

earliest example is the apocryphal book of Tobit, which uses a narrative to convey the series of empires. On his deathbed, Tobit tells his son to go to Media, because Nineveh (i.e., the Assyrians) will be overthrown. Then he predicts the destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem and the Exile, all of which can only indicate the Babylonian Empire. Finally, the Jews will be freed from their captivity to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the Temple, an allusion to the Persian period (14:4–7). The implicit imperial sequence in Tobit, therefore, is Assyria, Media, Babylonia, and Persia.¹⁰ Contemporaneous with Daniel, Sib. Or. 4 bears witness to the effects of the Greek conquest and, much like Daniel, adds Greece to the imperial series. The Oracle narrates ten generations of humanity. This ten-generation span is further sub-divided into separate empires.¹¹ The Assyrians reign for six generations (4.49–53), the Medes then rule for two generations (4.54–63) followed by the Persians for only one generation (4.65–85), and, finally, the Macedonians arrive (4.86–87).¹²

Among the Dead Sea Scrolls, two fragments of a work known as the Aramaic “Four Kingdoms” text (4Q552 and 4Q553) depict the four kingdoms as trees. A seer asks each tree its identity. The only preserved answer is from the first tree, which claims to be “Babylon” to which the seer responds, “You are the one who rules over Persia.”¹³ It is possible to infer from the description of another tree, which ruled over “the powers of the sea, and over the harbor,” that it is Greece. There is mention of a third tree and something about its “appearance”

10 Given the *ex-eventu* prophecy, scholars have dated the text to around 200 BCE based on its knowledge of the Greeks, but the lack of any anti-Greek rhetoric suggests it is before the Maccabean Revolt. See Benedikt Otzen, *Tobit and Judith* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2002), 57.

11 We see a similar ten-generation division, but without imperial associations, in the Sib. Or. 1–2.

12 No specific number of generations is assigned to the Macedonians, because, following the Macedonians, the Oracle describes the Roman rise to power. Since nine out of ten generations have already been covered, there simply are not enough generations to cover the Macedonians *and* the Romans. The addition of the Romans, thus, necessitated the removal of any explicit identification of the Macedonians’s one generation. Therefore, scholars have concluded that Sib. Or. 4.49–101 represents an earlier text comprised of a sequence of Assyrian, Median, Persian, and Greek empires. Since the Macedonians were only allotted one generation, this must mean that the original author did not know the duration of the Greek empires, making the date the early third century BCE (David Flusser, “The Four Empires in the Fourth Sibyl and in the Book of Daniel,” *IOS* 2 [1972]: 150–51).

13 Translations of the Dead Sea Scrolls are taken from Florentino García Martínez and Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar, eds., *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition* (Leiden: Brill, 1997).

(4Q552 1 i–ii 5–12).¹⁴ All that is revealed about the fourth tree is that it is higher than the others with a top reaching the heavens (4Q553, 6 1).¹⁵

Similar to these Qumran texts, the pseudepigraphic book of 2 Baruch also imagines the four kingdoms as trees. The first image of empires in 2 Baruch is “a forest with trees that was planted on the plain and surrounded by high mountains and rugged rocks” (36:2). The interpretation of the dream makes it clear that these trees are four kingdoms.¹⁶ Given that 2 Baruch was written after the destruction of the Temple, the final kingdom, a cedar, is Rome (36:7). Thus, we can see that in Jewish circles the four kingdoms motif was inserted into diverse genres—a deathbed prophecy, an oracular declaration, or dream-visions—and reworked using different images—historical events, generations of humanity or elements from the world of flora. Given that depicting empires as animals is a choice on the author’s part, then why depict the Four Kingdoms as fauna?

To answer this question, I would like to use a hermeneutical lens provided by the relatively new field of animal studies. Focusing on the animal is part of a recent turn that follows on the theoretical heels of postcolonial studies, queer theory and feminist criticism. Much like these earlier fields that attempted to resurrect the lost perspectives of subalterns, women, or those who did not fit into neat binaries, animal studies “advocated for equal consideration for

14 Peter W. Flint (“The Daniel Tradition at Qumran,” in *The Book of Daniel: Composition and Reception*, ed. John J. Collins and Peter W. Flint, VTSup 83 [Leiden: Brill, 2001], 362) understands the reference to the appearance of the third tree to mean that it is different, which, in turn, makes it comparable to the fourth beast of Daniel 7, which “was different from all the former beasts” (Dan 7:23).

15 Because the text is so fragmentary, a number of possibilities exist for the four trees’ identities, such as (1) Babylonia-Persia, Greece, Rome, and an eschatological Kingdom of Israel; or (2) Babylonia-Persia, Greece, Syria. See Flint, “The Daniel Tradition,” 362–63; and Loren T. Stuckenbruck, “The Formation and Re-Formation of Daniel in the Dead Sea Scrolls,” in *Scripture and the Scrolls*, vol. 2 of *The Bible and the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. James H. Charlesworth (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2006), 101–30. Regardless, the inclusion of Rome in the list seems likely as it accords well with the proposed dating of both manuscripts to the early first century CE (Flint, “The Daniel Tradition,” 332). See also the contribution by Andrew Perrin in this volume.

16 The interpretation in 2 Bar. 39 is explicit about four kingdoms, but the dream is not. Matthias Henze highlights this difference (*Jewish Apocalypticism in Late First Century Israel: Reading Second Baruch in Context*, TSAJ 142 [Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011], 264). Although he raises the possibility that the dream and interpretation come from different sources, I think the “disappearance” of the other kingdoms is better explained by a telescoping effect, which focuses on the contemporaneous empire that the writer is living under. The same is true of the interpretations of the fourth kingdoms in Dan 2:40–43 and Dan 7:19–26.

animals.”¹⁷ Some scholars went so far as to accuse humanists of a “speciesism” that assumed humans were the only ones who inhabited the ethical world.¹⁸ Thus, much of animal studies originated among philosophers. For example, in a seminal piece entitled *The Animal That Therefore I Am*, Derrida even criticizes our use of the term “the Animal,” placing it in quotations and writing that it is a “catch-all concept” that has been used to “designate every living thing that is held not to be human” and one that ignores the “heterogeneous multiplicity of other living things.”¹⁹

Animal studies, however, is only beginning to experience a turn within biblical and Jewish studies. In *Reading the Bible with Animal Studies*, Ken Stone argues that it is the “multispecies context” of the Hebrew Bible that shapes biblical theology and, thus, the development of Judaism and Christianity.²⁰ The reason is as follows:

Claude Lévi-Strauss famously observed that animals are not only “good to eat” but also “good to think” ... When the writers of biblical literature “thought” with animals, however, they were not only thinking about animals. They were, in addition, using their observations about and relations with animals to understand themselves, their relations with one another (including the relations of power and subordination that structured their societies), their relations with other peoples and nations, their relations with God.²¹

17 Beth A. Berkowitz, *Animals and Animality in the Babylonian Talmud* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 10. In other words, there has been a critique of “the apparatus that melds all life forms other than the human into the single essence known as ‘the animal,’ and they see the human/animal binary as similar and related to other reductive binaries: white/black, male/female, straight/gay, able-bodied/disabled, culture/nature, and so forth” (Berkowitz, *Animals and Animality*, 18).

18 See, for example, Kari Weil, who writes, “Influenced by postmodern theory and by feminist and postcolonial critiques of the ways Western, educated Man has acted as the norm for what counts as human, recent discussions in animal studies have questioned to what extent our understanding of rights and protection are adequate for humans” (*Thinking Animals: Why Animal Studies Now?* [New York: Columbia University Press, 2012]: 4–5). For an overview of the field, see also Cary Wolfe, “Human, All Too Human: ‘Animal Studies’ and the Humanities” *PMLA* 124 (2009): 564–574.

19 Jacques Derrida, *The Animal That Therefore I Am*, trans. Marie-Louise Mallet (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008), here 34, 31, 48.

20 Ken Stone, *Reading the Hebrew Bible with Animal Studies* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2018), 4. For a history of Western philosophers who cite the biblical text as their foundation for thinking about animals, see Hannah M. Strømme, “Beastly Questions and Biblical Blame,” in *The Bible and Posthumanism*, ed. Jennifer L. Koosed (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2014), 13–28.

21 Stone, *Reading*, 5.

Similarly, in *Animals and Animality in the Babylonian Talmud*, Beth Berkowitz explores the rabbinic conceptualization of animals and animality.²² She argues that:

the Babylonian Talmud created a discourse about animals that imagines them as agents and subjects in new ways, as “persons” with the capacity to exercise intention and plan for the future, to experience pleasure and be held accountable for sin, to undergo suffering ... and to break free of the property category into which they are usually placed.²³

Together, these two works, among others, serve as the basis for my thinking about the animality that pervades those texts that use the four kingdoms motif. Given that the four kingdoms motif is a discourse used to deny the inevitable and eternal nature of imperial power, then, I would argue that the animalistic version of the four kingdoms is itself a discourse within a discourse.

3 Daniel 7

In Daniel 7, Daniel recounts his vision of four beasts coming up out of the sea (v. 3) and an interpreting angel reveals that they represent four kings (v. 17). At first glance, they serve an obvious function—to terrify Daniel (v. 15). And it is no wonder why. Each of the beasts shares features or behaviors with carnivores. The first is like a lion and has eagle wings (v. 4). The second resembles a

²² Within the field of rabbinic studies, see also the recent work of Mira Beth Wasserman, *Jews, Gentiles, and Other Animals: The Talmud After the Humanities* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017). Wasserman explores the tractate of Avoda Zara using animal studies along with gender studies, critical race studies, disability studies and new materialisms, which all contribute to “posthumanism” and the realization that human life is embedded “within complex cultural, ecological, and technological systems” (*Jews, Gentiles, and Other Animals*, 4). In particular, Wasserman understands the rabbis as telling stories that “invite readers to survey the wide compass of experience that Jews and non-Jews share in common, as human beings, as animals, and as material bodies” (*Jews, Gentiles, and Other Animals*, 5). Thus, she, in part, uses animal studies to answer the question, “What does it mean to be human?” Similarly, Jennifer L. Koosed poses the same question vis-à-vis the Bible: “the Bible also contains multiple moments of disruption, boundary crossing, and category confusion: animals speak, God becomes man, spirits haunt the living and monsters confound at the end. All of these stories explore the boundaries of the human in ways that destabilized the very category of the human” (“Humanity at Its Limits,” in *The Bible and Posthumanism*, ed. Jennifer L. Koosed [Atlanta: SBL Press, 2014], 3).

²³ Berkowitz, *Animals*, 19.

bear, but one in the midst of eating as it has ribs hanging out of its mouth and it is commanded to devour (v. 5). The third is like a leopard (v. 6). Although the fourth creature lacks a specific animal comparison, it has horns and “great iron teeth” (v. 7). Like the second beast, the fact that it kills is emphasized—it devours, breaks things into pieces, and stomps whatever is left (v. 7).

In addition to being carnivores, these animals are wild. The expectation is that they will kill, maim, damage, and eat.²⁴ In fact, the lion, the bear and the leopard appear in a prophecy by Hosea in which God declares how Israel, depicted as sheep, will be punished:

So I will become like a lion to them,
 like a leopard I will lurk beside the way.
 I will fall upon them like a bear robbed of her cubs,
 and will tear open the covering of their heart;
 there I will devour them like a lion,
 as a wild animal would mangle them

HOSEA 13:7–8

These animals are a metaphor for divine punishment, which, “shows that familiarity with animals supplied the Bible’s writers, not only with positive symbols of care and sustenance, but also frightening symbols of danger. It comes from a world in which the risk of losing domesticated animals to wild ones was real.”²⁵

Yet, Daniel 7’s animals are more than just dangerous—they are outside of divine creation. While the beasts are stirred up by four winds of heaven (v. 2), they are not divine forces, but harken back to the primordial world.²⁶ The sea is not the Mediterranean, but the watery chaos that existed before creation.²⁷

24 Three of these animals—the lion, the bear and the leopard—appear in rabbinic literature as species for whom aggressive behavior is considered normal and, therefore, anyone who owns them is automatically liable for damages they cause (Berkowitz, *Animals*, 129).

25 Stone, *Reading*, 117.

26 The verb used in Dan 7:2—מַיַּי, “to stir up”—is similarly used in Job 38:8 to describe the moment of creation that the sea ushered forth (Collins, *Daniel*, 294). In Gen 1:2, a divine wind hovers over the deep waters at the very beginning of creation, but peacefully; the winds do not touch the sea. See Jacques B. Doukhan, “Allusions à la création dans le livre de Daniel,” in *The Book of Daniel in The Light of New Findings*, ed. A. S. van der Woude (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1993), 289.

27 The sea is related to cosmogonic battles throughout the biblical text (e.g., Ps 29; 68; 74; 89; 104; Isa 27:1; 51:9–11; Job 3; 7; 26; 40–41). See André Lacocque, “Allusions to Creation in Daniel 7,” in *The Book of Daniel: Composition and Reception*, ed. John J. Collins and Peter W. Flint, VTSup 83 (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 127–28.

The beasts are like those other primordial creatures that inhabit the sea. In Isaiah, we read of two dragon sea creatures: Leviathan (Isa 27:1) and Rahab (Isa 51:9).²⁸ The sea itself also must be defeated by God. In Canaanite mythology that battle is personified as Yamm, the sea god, is vanquished by the Ugaritic head god Baal. In the biblical text, the sea comes to represent not an opposing deity, but enemy nations.²⁹ Thus, having beasts from the sea represent enemy empires fits into these already established biblical motifs.

The absence of God in Daniel 7 further suggests that the beasts' creation positions them against God. Moreover, the beasts are distorted versions of themselves, making them not only "predators but monsters, composite creatures mutated beyond the natural order."³⁰ For example, the third beast has four wings and four heads (v. 6). The beasts of this vision are dangerous not only because of their innate predatory behavior, but because they are embodied chaos, defying the categories of human and animal that make up the ordered world.³¹ They must be destroyed and, indeed, later in the vision they are (vv. 11–12).

While other scholars have previously argued that the beasts are meant to symbolize the turmoil that is empire,³² a focus on animal theory helps us to see how the animals relate to the humans in Daniel. As Walter Benjamin writes: "In an aversion to animals the predominant feeling is fear of being recognized by them through contact. The horror that stirs deep in man is an obscure awareness that in him something lives so akin to the animal that it might be recognized."³³ In other words, animals remind us that we too are merely

28 Leviathan similarly appears in Job 3:8; 41:1; Ps 74:14; 104:26. Rahab is described as a dragon in Job 9:13; 26:12; Ps 89:10.

29 Collins sees Daniel 7, in particular, as "a reasonable extension of the traditional symbolism, in view of the identification of the sea monster (e.g., Rahab) with the political enemies of Israel in the Bible" (*Daniel*, 289 n. 96). See, for example, Isa 17:12–13. For a review of the parallels with Canaanite mythology and, in particular the Baal cycle, see Collins, *Daniel*, 286–94; and Lacocque, "Allusions to Creation," 118. The Babylonian Enuma Elish also features the god Marduk defeating Tiamat, the goddess of watery chaos.

30 Anatheia E. Portier-Young, *Apocalypse Against Empire: Theologies of Resistance in Early Judaism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011), 171.

31 Portier-Young, *Apocalypse Against Empire*, 171.

32 In addition to Portier-Young, see also Rebecca Raphael, "Monsters and the Crippled Cosmos: Construction of the Other in Fourth Ezra," in *The "Other" in Second Temple Judaism: Essays in Honor of John J. Collins*, ed. Daniel C. Harlow, et al. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011), 287–90; and David Bryan, *Cosmos, Chaos, and the Kosher Mentality*, JSPSup 12 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 239.

33 Walter Benjamin, *Reflections, Essays, Aphorisms, Autobiographical Writings*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovariovich, 1986), 66–67.

animals. This realization is made all the more vivid for Daniel who sees that the beasts display human characteristics.

The first beast is “lifted up from the ground and made to stand on two feet like a human being; and a human mind was given to it” (v. 4). With the second, like the first, there is an emphasis on its standing; it is raised up on one side and told to “arise!” (v. 5). The fourth has one horn with “eyes like human eyes” and “a mouth speaking arrogantly” (vv. 8, 20). It is no wonder that Daniel says that “my spirit was troubled within me and the visions of my head terrified me” (v. 15) and, even once the interpretation is given, he still relates, “my thoughts greatly terrified me, and my face turned pale; but I kept the matter in my mind” (v. 28). If we consider this in terms of the four kingdoms motif, then the forecasted history of empires is one that is meant to instill horror in the viewer.³⁴ Daniel can barely react. This is typical of horror, because “unlike fear, which presents a viable strategy (run!), horror denies flight as an option. And it seems to deny flight as an option too.”³⁵ This mirrors the passivity of the book’s reaction to empire as a whole, which does not advocate rebellion.³⁶ Instead, all Daniel can do is wait for the resolution of these imperial eras with the arrival of the envisioned fifth, divine kingdom.

The human-animal boundary, however, remains intact in this vision. In contrast to the semi-human beasts, explicitly human figures will usher in the end of empire. The Ancient of Days, representing God, is depicted as humanlike with white clothing and hair. He sits on a throne to decree judgment upon the beasts (vv. 9–10, 22) and gives final authority to another humanlike figure—the son of man (vv. 13–14). The identity of this figure is much debated.³⁷ Although some scholars have argued that the son of man should be understood collectively as Israel, given that the Ancient of Days as God is more “mythic-realistic” than symbolic, it makes sense to similarly understand the son of man, who comes in with the clouds of heaven, as a divine being.³⁸

Thus, in Daniel 7 there are multiple points represented along an animal-human-divine spectrum. Daniel, clearly human, stands on one end. Alongside

34 William Ian Miller writes that “vision is the sense through which much of horror is accessed” because “vision activates our sympathetic imaginative powers” (*The Anatomy of Disgust* [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997], 81).

35 Miller, *Anatomy of Disgust*, 26.

36 Chapters 1–6 advocate assimilation or martyrdom whereas chapter 12 offers up divine justice after death as a solution to the evil on earth.

37 See the overview of this debate in Carol A. Newsom with Brennan W. Breed, *Daniel: A Commentary*, OTL (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2014), 234–36.

38 John J. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Vision of the Book of Daniel* (Missoula: Scholars Press for Harvard Semitic Museum, 1977), 6.

of him is all that is divine (i.e., the Ancient of Days and Son of Man), which, while not ontologically human, are associated with Daniel via their human imagery. This parallel ultimately enhances the position of Daniel and all of Israel. On the other side are the empires. Their beastly natures dominate, revealing that they are more animalistic than even known animals. While their occasional human characteristics terrify Daniel, they also serve to underscore that although, in actuality, empires are comprised of human rulers and subjects, they do not merit a human depiction.

4 Contemporary Texts in the Hellenistic Period

Given the turbulence experienced under the Ptolemies and Seleucids and, most particularly, during the reign of Antiochus IV,³⁹ it is no coincidence, then, that a similar combination of animal imagery and the four kingdoms motif appears in two other texts that are contemporaneous with Daniel—the Testament of Naphtali and the Animal Apocalypse. In the Testament of Naphtali, dated to the second century BCE,⁴⁰ Naphtali has a dream in which sacred writing predicts, “Assyrians, Medes, Persians, Elamites, Gelachians, Chaldeans, Syrians shall obtain a share in the twelve staffs of Israel through

39 During the years of conflict between the Ptolemies and Seleucids, different factions had developed in Jerusalem that supported one side or the other. The Gerousia, the council of elders, the high priest Simon the Just, and the Tobiads all backed the Seleucids whereas the former high priest Onias III and the Oniad family supported the Ptolemies. It was the disagreement between these two factions that led to the disruption of the hereditary succession of the high priesthood, making it into a position that was given to the highest bidder by Antiochus IV. This change, combined with an increasing movement towards Hellenization, led to popular discontent, restrictions on religious practice, and, ultimately, the Maccabean revolt. The scholarly consensus follows Tcherikover's theory, based on 2 Maccabees, that Antiochus instituted restrictive religious measures as a response to rising tensions, not that the revolt followed the persecutions (Victor Tcherikover, *Hellenistic Civilization and the Jews* [Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society], 191). In sum, the reign of Antiochus IV was filled with extreme conflict.

40 This date is based on the text's reference to Syria (i.e., Greece), not Rome, as the last empire. A second century BCE date is also suggested by the fact that the Testament shares a genealogy of Bilhah (T. Naph 1:6–12) with a scroll from Qumran (4Q215) as well as the concept of a dual messiahship with Qumran theology. The Testament of Naphtali is extant both in Greek and in late Hebrew. However, there is no clear evidence that a full Hebrew testament existed prior to the Greek as it might merely reflect a tradition used by the Greek author. See Robert A. Kugler, *The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 28–29; and H. C. Kee, “Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs,” *OTP*, ed. James H. Charlesworth (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1983), 1:775–80.

captivity” (T. Naph. 5:8).⁴¹ While the list consists of more than four empires, the beginning of this list echoes the Assyrian-Median-Persian scheme of Tobit and Sib. Or. 4. The Syrians at the end of the list parallel Daniel’s addition of the Greeks to the four kingdom series.⁴² The Testament further associates this imperial sequence with a hybrid animal. Before the sacred writing, there appears a vision of “a bull on the earth with two great horns and an eagle’s wings on his back” (T. Naph. 5:6). Given the imperial concerns of the dream, it is plausible that the bull with the horns represents the Seleucids and the Ptolemies⁴³ and the eagle represents the rising power of the Romans.⁴⁴ As in Daniel 7, the seer cannot control this beast, saying, “we wished to seize him, but could not” (T. Naph. 5:6). Instead, like the son of man, it takes an esteemed *human* figure to conquer the beast—“Joseph came, and seized him, and ascended up with him on high” (T. Naph. 5:7).

An even more extensive version of the animalistic four kingdoms motif appears in the Animal Apocalypse, 1 Enoch 85–90, which dates to 164–160 BCE at the end of the Maccabean Revolt.⁴⁵ This apocalypse details one of Enoch’s dreams as he retells it to his son Methuselah. Encompassing the entire course of history, the dream begins with an abbreviated recounting of the Watchers’s rebellion (1 En. 86–88) from 1 Enoch 7. In particular, the myth of Shemihazah is retold with the Watchers as stars and the humans as cattle grazing. The fallen stars turn into bulls, so that they are able to impregnate the cows. As in 1 Enoch 7, the mating results in distinct progeny. Instead of giants, however, the cows give birth to elephants, camels, and asses. Although these animals in and of themselves are not unnatural, the fact that they are a different species from the cattle who give birth to them and different from one another evokes a sense

41 This list does not exist in the later Hebrew Testament of Naphtali.

42 The placement of the Chaldeans, which may represent the Babylonians, is notably odd, but seems to reflect the undeniable knowledge that the Babylonians also oppressed the Jewish people (Kee, “Testaments,” 812).

43 While there is no mention of a bull in Daniel, the horns on the fourth beast in Dan 7:7–8 (as well as the he-goat with horns in Dan 8:8–9, 21–22) also represent Greek rulers.

44 Kee, “Testaments,” 813. The eagle as symbolic of Roman rule is well attested in both Roman and Jewish literature as will be shown below in the discussion of 4 Ezra. There is also the possibility that the eagle could instead represent the Greeks as we shall see below in the discussion of the Animal Apocalypse.

45 The consensus for this date stems from: (1) references to the Maccabean war (see, for example, the “ram with a large horn” in 1 En. 90:9, which is thought to represent Judah Maccabee); (2) the evidence of Aramaic fragments found at Qumran (based on paleography, 4QEn^f is the oldest, dating to the third quarter of the second century BCE); and (3) the Apocalypse’s incorporation of the earlier, third century BCE Book of Watchers. See Patrick Tiller, *A Commentary on the Animal Apocalypse of 1 Enoch*, EJL 4 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993), 61–82.

of disorder similar to what we saw with the hybrid animals in Daniel 7 and the Testament of Naphtali.⁴⁶ The behavior of these offspring is also disturbing.⁴⁷ Although they are naturally herbivores, they begin to act like carnivores as they “bite with their teeth and devour and gore with their horns” all of the cattle (1 En. 86:5).⁴⁸ The offspring then turn on one another (1 En. 87:1).⁴⁹ As a result, the response is the same as in Daniel 7—horror. The “sons of the earth began to tremble” (1 En. 86:6)⁵⁰ and even the earth itself “began to cry out” (1 En. 87:1).

The elephants, camels, and asses (presumably those that have not yet been killed) are punished with the flood (1 En. 89:6). However, unnatural births continue afterwards, suggesting that something of the original three animals remains.⁵¹ Three bulls, the sons of Noah, begin “to beget wild beasts and birds, so that there arose from them every kind of species: lions, leopards, wolves, dogs, hyenas, wild boars, foxes, conies, pigs, falcons, vultures, kites, eagles, and ravens” (1 En. 89:10). These animals represent the foreign nations of Genesis 10. Like the elephants, camels, and asses, these nations, who are all either predators or scavengers, behave in a vicious manner, biting one another (1 En. 89:11).⁵² In turn, some of these nations are empires. For example,

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- 46 For a list of similarities between the Animal Apocalypse and Daniel 7, see James R. Davila, “The Animal Apocalypse and Daniel,” in *Enoch and Qumran Origins: New Light on a Forgotten Connection*, ed. Gabriele Boccaccini (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 35–38.
- 47 Bryan refers to this as “concept collapse” in which there is a “deliberate breaking of the bounds of the imagery by the seer in order to stress the extreme character of the chaos which had invaded the created order” (*Cosmos, Chaos*, 96).
- 48 It is unclear who the subject of the action is in this verse. Here I follow George Nickelsburg in assuming that the “devouring” in 1 En. 86:5b and 6a parallel each other, making the offspring the actors (1 *Enoch 1: A Commentary on the Book of 1 Enoch, Chapters 1–36, 81–108* [Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001], 374).
- 49 Nickelsburg has “bulls” (1 *Enoch 1*, 364), but, like Tiller, describes these as human beings (1 *Enoch 1*, 374) not the stars that have turned into bulls. Matthew Goff (“Monstrous Appetites: Giants, Cannibalism, and Insatiable Eating in Enochic Literature,” *JAJ* 1 [2010]: 19–42) understands this verse to mean that the giants are devouring the Watchers.
- 50 Nickelsburg points out that here the author has departed from his animal symbolism in a way that “underscores the universal human terror that is the reality behind this part of the allegory” (1 *Enoch 1*, 374).
- 51 Tiller sees the same parallel: “that unnatural birth is a negative symbol is verified by the fact that it is paralleled by the unnatural birth of elephants, camels, and asses from stars and cows” (*Commentary*, 271).
- 52 Nickelsburg, likewise, notices a parallel: “soon the beasts will turn on the Israelites as the giants had turned on humanity” (1 *Enoch 1*, 377). Bryan (*Cosmos, Chaos*, 168–85) and Tiller (*Commentary*, 28–29) emphasize the distinction of clean (i.e., the sheep) versus unclean animals (i.e., the beasts). While this is true, it is because they are predators that they are unclean in the first place, so it is their natural behavior that is the primary distinguishing characteristic.

the lions and leopards that “devoured and swallowed up most of those sheep” and then “burnt down that tower and demolished that house” (1 En. 89:66) are an allusion to the Babylonians and their destruction of the Temple. The return from exile under Persia follows, but soon eagles began to “devour those sheep and peck out their eyes and devour their flesh” (1 En. 90:2). These are the Greeks under Alexander the Great, who then divide into the Ptolemies, as kites (1 En. 90:2, 4, 11, 13, 16), and the Seleucids, as ravens (1 En. 90:2, 8, 9, 11, 12). The association of the animals with empires is further underscored by the division of animals into four imperial periods, which consist of seventy consecutive “hours” (1 En. 89:72) and are allotted to the care of seventy shepherds. After we read about the destruction of the Temple, the Babylonian period concludes with the statement that “the shepherds were pasturing for twelve hours” (1 En. 89:72). Twenty-three shepherds are allotted to the Persian period (1 En. 89:72). Twenty-three shepherds also correspond to the Ptolemies and, finally, twelve to the Seleucids.⁵³ This four-part division uses the four kingdoms motif and populates it once more with wild animals.

Thus, we can trace a distinct line from the giants to the first nations to the four empires via their animal symbols, all of which are violent and unnaturally begotten. For the author of the Animal Apocalypse, the implicit message appears to be that the voraciousness of the empires in his present day has its origins in the voraciousness of the giants *before* the flood. The connection between the antediluvian and postdiluvian animals is confirmed by the explicit parallelism of their demise. The antediluvian animals are given a sword to destroy each other (1 En. 88:2), and then they “sank to the bottom” during the flood (1 En. 89:6). Similarly, the postdiluvian, imperial animals are also destroyed by sinking into the earth (1 En. 90:18) and by a sword (1 En. 90:19). This lineage underscores the degree to which the empires are ungodly. They stem from the same divine disobedience enacted by the Watchers.

As in Daniel 7 and the Testament of Naphtali, the emphasis on zoomorphic symbols also highlights by contrast the human figures in the text. Since all humans are symbolized as animals in the apocalypse, any humans, in turn, represent angelic beings.⁵⁴ The seventy shepherds mentioned above are given power

53 See 1 En. 89:65–72a; 89:72b–90:1; 90:2–5, 6–19. This division is that of Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch* 1, 387–88. While others agree on the division into four periods, they do disagree slightly on the division of the verses. See, for example, Tiller, *Commentary*, 55; and Bryan, *Cosmos, Chaos*, 53.

54 Bennie H. Reynolds III reads many of the symbols in the Animal Apocalypse as sharing “the same representation techniques” as in Daniel (*Between Symbolism and Realism: The Use of Symbolic and Non-Symbolic Language in Ancient Jewish Apocalypses 333–63 B.C.E.*, JAJSup 8 [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011], 167). For example, humans (and

from God to either to protect or to destroy the sheep, or Israel (1 En. 89:59–61). The shepherds do this via the beasts. For example, the shepherds “abandoned those sheep into the hands of the lions. And the lions and leopards devoured and swallowed up most of those sheep” (1 En. 89:65–66). The shepherds are overzealous in their destruction (1 En. 89:61–64), so seven white men, another group of angels, throw them into a fiery abyss (1 En. 90:24–25). It is clear that imperial power is merely an illusion. The interplay of empires is only a reflection of the true power, divine power, as embodied by the humans in the text.⁵⁵

After considering these three texts from the Hellenistic period—Daniel, Testament of Naphtali and Animal Apocalypse—a few aspects of the animalistic four kingdom motif become apparent. Firstly, the animals are all dangerous. Either they are predators, like the lion or the leopard, or they behave wildly, like the bull. The obvious implication is that empires are powerful and apt to destroy those whom they subjugate. Secondly, all of the animals are unnatural. They are either hybrids or have unnatural origins, making them as much monsters as animals. The implication here is that empires are ungodly. They are not part of what should be a divine, ordered world. Moreover, they instill horror. They are unlike any power that has been experienced and so there is no recourse but to wait out the time of empires. Finally, by focusing on the animals our attention is by default honed in on that which is human in the text. The “humans,” even when they represent the angelic, serve to end the four kingdoms. Thus, that which has the power to end empires is antithetical to empires. A binary between animal/human serves to underscore a similar binary between imperial kingdom/divine kingdom.

5 Roman Period Texts

A change to the neat binary between animal/human, however, occurs in the Roman period. In the aftermath of the destruction of the Temple and under

stars) symbolize angels in Daniel 7–8 as well, which points to “some deep structures within the language of Ancient Jewish apocalypses” (Reynolds, *Between Symbolism and Realism*, 171). He concludes that this shared symbolic language “must have been intended for large audiences” (Reynolds, *Between Symbolism and Realism*, 223). My survey of the frequent use of the animalistic four kingdoms motif lends support to Reynolds’s argument. Not only were diverse Jewish writers acquainted with this symbolic motif, their use of it suggests that they anticipated widespread familiarity with it among their audiences as well.

55 One could argue that the people of Israel are similarly empowered by their association with the divine as they are at times depicted as animal figures who turn into humans. For example, Moses first appears as a sheep, but becomes an angel after ascending Mount Sinai (see 1 En. 89:16–36).

the full weight of Roman imperial rule, two texts—Fourth Ezra and the book of Revelation—continue to use animal imagery to allude to empires. However, they alter the four kingdoms to focus in on one kingdom and they abandon the animal/human binary entirely.

The Fourth Book of Ezra (4 Ezra) is a reaction to the destruction of the Second Temple, dating to post-70 CE.⁵⁶ Thus, even though the text sounds as if it comes from Ezra of the First Temple era, it actually responds to the imperial rule of the Romans.⁵⁷ In 4 Ezra 11–12, Ezra dreams of an eagle with twelve wings and three heads that comes up from the sea (4 Ezra 11:1), a clear echo of the beginning of Daniel 7. The eagle is specifically identified as the fourth beast (4 Ezra 11:40). The author of 4 Ezra must have realized that the fourth beast of Daniel, the Greek Empire, was neither destroyed nor replaced by the anticipated divine kingdom. Instead, the Roman Empire superseded it. As a result, Daniel's fourth beast was no longer relevant, but needed to be reimagined as the most powerful beast yet—an eagle.⁵⁸ This eagle, in turn, “conquered all the beasts that have gone before” (4 Ezra 11:40). While it is unclear whether the fourth beast was responsible for defeating the other beasts in Daniel 7, there is no such confusion in 4 Ezra.

Less explicitly, however, the eagle's characteristics incorporate those of the first three beasts in such a way that it appears to have subsumed (or consumed?) them into itself. The eagle resembles the first beast who had the wings of an eagle (Dan 7:4) and the third beast who had wings like a bird (Dan 7:6). The third beast also has multiple heads like the eagle (although four instead of three). Other attributes are echoed, but inverted. While the cosmic winds create the beasts in Daniel 7, the eagle controls the elements, spreading “his wings over all the earth and all the winds of heaven blew upon him and the clouds were gathered about him” (4 Ezra 11:2). Daniel's third beast received dominion (Dan 7:6), but the eagle takes it for itself: “The eagle flew with his wings to reign over the earth and over those who dwell in it. And I saw how all things under heaven were subjected to him and no one spoke against him” (4 Ezra 11:5–6).

56 The consensus, which is partly based on Clement of Alexandria's citation of 4 Ezra in his second century CE work, *Stromateis*, is that the book was composed during Domitian's reign (81–96 CE). Additionally, scholars have attempted to identify the emperors symbolized in the eagle's body parts (chapters 11–12). For more on the dating, see Michael E. Stone, *A Commentary on the Book of Fourth Ezra* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990), 9–10.

57 I have previously discussed the eagle of 4 Ezra in Alexandria Frisch, “Matthew 24:28: ‘Wherever the Body is, There the Eagles Will Be Gathered Together’ and the Death of the Roman Empire,” in *The Gospels in First Century Judaea*, ed. R. Steven Notley and Jeffrey P. Garcia, JCPs 29 (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 79–81.

58 Laura Bizzarro, “The ‘Meaning of History’ in the Fifth Vision of 4 Ezra,” in *Interpreting 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch: International Studies*, ed. Gabriele Boccaccini and Jason M. Zurawski, LSTS 87 (New York: T&T Clark, 2014), 33.

In Daniel, the first beast “was lifted up from the earth and made to stand on two feet like a human being” (Dan 7:4), and the second beast “was raised up on one side” (Dan 7:5). The eagle, in contrast, stands by itself as it “rose upon his talons” (4 Ezra 11:7). Instead of receiving endorsement from an external voice (Dan 7:5), the eagle uses its own voice: “[The eagle] uttered a cry to his wings, saying, ‘Do not all watch at the same time; let each sleep in his own place, and watch in his turn, but let the heads be reserved for the last’” (4 Ezra 11:7–11). The inversion of these beastly characteristics makes the eagle appear more powerful than any of Daniel’s three beasts, who seem passive by comparison.

In addition to amplifying the power of the eagle, the author of 4 Ezra has done something that we have not seen thus far with the four kingdoms motif—he has collapsed it into one kingdom. That one, in turn, is all the stronger for subsuming the identities of the previous three; it commands the winds, it seizes dominion, it rises up, it speaks. The fourth kingdom—the eagle—is not just the most powerful empire, it is ultimately the only one.

Yet, the author does not stop there. As we have seen, the Jewish renditions of the four kingdoms motif have been used to convey an anti-imperial message and the author of 4 Ezra is no different. Although the eagle appears to be far more powerful than any of Daniel’s beasts, a further comparison with them reveals that it is doomed. In Daniel, a voice speaks to the second beast encouraging it to be oppressive—“Arise, devour much meat!” (Dan 7:5). In contrast, when a voice speaks to the eagle, it forecasts its eventual demise: “Hear me, you who have ruled the earth all this time. I announce this to you before you disappear. After you no one shall rule as long as you, or even half as long” (4 Ezra 11:6–17). The second beast in Daniel has three ribs in its mouth (v. 5) and the fourth beast has great iron teeth that it uses to eat (Dan 7:7).⁵⁹ The eagle, in contrast, devours itself as “the head turned with those that were with it and devoured the two little wings which were planning to reign” (Dan 11:31) and “the head on the right side devoured the one on the left” (Dan 11:35).⁶⁰ The *total dominion* of the eagle, therefore, only serves to forecast its *total destruction*. Indeed, we read that its whole body is burnt up (4 Ezra 12:3). Herein lies the motivation behind collapsing the four kingdoms into one: with the eagle’s destruction, the author of 4 Ezra is able to affirm the end of the entire phenomenon of empire, not just one, individual empire.

59 Collins, *Daniel*, 298, compares the ribs in the bear’s mouth with Amos 3:12 to show that the bear is eating its prey.

60 As Raphael put it, “The passive lends a touch of inevitability, as if such evil monsters simply self-destruct, unable to sustain their own chaos” (“Monsters,” 290).

The specific identification of the kingdom as an eagle gives added force to this altered four kingdom motif. The Romans themselves often equated their rule with the eagle. For example, in 106 BCE, Consul Marius made the eagle the sole symbol of the Roman army's legions as part of his military reform.⁶¹ Josephus informs us that this symbol was known to those in Judea: "Next the ensigns surrounding the eagle, which in the Roman army precedes every legion, because it is the king and the bravest of all birds; it is regarded by them as the symbol of empire, and whoever may be their adversaries, an omen of victory" (*J.W.* 3.123).⁶² The eagle, then, works precisely because it epitomizes the overwhelming nature of Roman power.

The collapsing of the four kingdoms motif into a one kingdom motif also occurs in another text that reacts to Roman rule—the book of Revelation. Dating to the early 90s CE,⁶³ its eschatological character and its references to Daniel mean that the book should be considered alongside Jewish apocalypses.⁶⁴ In Revelation 12, a dragon that represents Satan stands on the shore (12:18) and then a beast with ten horns and seven heads comes forth (13:1). The dragon then gives the beast his power and his throne and authority (v. 2). In Revelation 17, the seven heads are interpreted as "seven mountains ... and they are also seven kings" (17:9–10). The seven mountains are those seven hills upon which Rome was famously built.⁶⁵ The beast, therefore, represents imperial power and, more specifically, the Roman Empire.

Images from the four beasts of Daniel 7 figure prominently in the description of the beast. They all rise out of the sea (Rev 13:1). Revelation's beast has

61 Henry M. D. Parker, "Signa militaria," *OCD* 1:1406. The eagle figures prominently in Roman mythology. For example, the eagle carried the thunderbolts of Jupiter, the patron deity of the Roman state. The eagle was also the bearer of omens (see, for example, Livy, *The History of Rome*, 1.34; and Pliny, *Nat.* 15.136–37).

62 A few decades later, Herod put a golden eagle above the gate of the renovated Temple (*Ant.* 17.151; *J.W.* 1.650); the association between Rome and the eagle would have been obvious to those in Jerusalem. The eagle was also used to symbolize Rome in Jewish texts. See 1QpHab 3:6–12 and the T. Mos. 10:8.

63 Irenaeus (*Adv. Haer.* 5.30.3) claimed that the book was in existence at the end of Domitian's reign (81–96 CE). For a discussion of both the external and internal evidence that supports this date, see Adela Yarbro Collins, *Crisis and Catharsis: The Power of the Apocalypse* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1984), 54–83.

64 Pierre-Maurice Bogaert, "Les apocalypses contemporaines de Baruch, d'Esdras et de Jean," in *L'Apocalypse johannique et l'Apocalyptique dans le Nouveau Testament*, ed. J. Lambrecht (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1980), 47–68.

65 Robert H. Mounce, *The Book of Revelation* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977), 315. The connection with the Roman Empire is further supported by the details that one of the heads of the beast had a lethal but healed wound (Rev 13:3), an allusion to Nero, who legend holds survived a slit throat (Tacitus, *Hist.* 1, 2 and 11, 8).

ten horns (Rev 13:1) like the fourth beast (Dan 7:7) and a total of seven heads (Rev 13:1) like all four beasts combined. The beast also has features of a leopard, a bear and a lion (Rev 13:2), paralleling the first three beasts in Daniel (Dan 7:4–6). The beast in Revelation speaks “haughty and blasphemous words” (Rev 13:5) just as the smallest horn of the fourth beast speaks “great things” against God (Dan 7:8, 20).⁶⁶ Both Rev 13:7 and Dan 7:21 involve the beast making war against the holy ones. Finally, the beast’s authority will last for forty-two months (Rev 13:5), which is equivalent to three and a half years, the same amount of time that the holy ones in Daniel will be oppressed by the small horn (Dan 7:25). Like the eagle of 4 Ezra, characteristics of all the beasts of Daniel 7 have been subsumed into *one* beast.⁶⁷

The collapsing of the multiple kingdoms is further symbolized by the whore, identified as “Babylon the great” (Rev 17:5), who rides on the beast. The physical conjoining of the Roman beast and the Babylonian whore signifies the enfolding of the two into one enduring imperial phenomenon. Babylon *is* Rome: “the representation of Rome as a foreign, peripheral creature ... is coupled seamlessly with the depiction of Rome as a wanton prostitute. Beast and Babylon, monsters both, must together submit to the divine will.”⁶⁸ This is the same reason that in 4 Ezra the experiences of the author under the Roman Empire can be writ onto Ezra’s own experience in the world of the Babylonian Empire.⁶⁹ The fates of the beast of Revelation and the eagle of 4 Ezra are also the same. The horns of the beast “will devour [the whore’s] flesh and burn her up with fire” (Rev 17:16). Since the whore is subsumed into the beast that is Rome, then Rome destroys itself.⁷⁰ In a striking parallel, the eagle does the same—both devour themselves and then are burned up (Rev 17:6; 4 Ezra 11:35; 12:3). Revelation also shares with 4 Ezra the notion that the empire’s vast might

66 There is also a possible parallel between the arrogant horn (Dan 7:20) and the beast in Revelation 17, which is “full of blasphemous names” (Rev 17:4). See Christopher A. Frilingos, *Spectacles of Empire: Monsters, Martyrs, and the Book of Revelation* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 105.

67 For a list of similarities between Daniel 7 and Revelation 13, see Joseph Poon, *The Identities of the Beast from the Sea and the Beast from the Land in Revelation 13* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2017), 20–21.

68 Frilingos, *Spectacles*, 105.

69 Yarbro Collins, *Crisis and Catharsis*, 57–58, argues that since the name Babylon on the whore’s head is characterized as a “mystery” (Rev 17:5), then it is symbolic. She further suggests that this comparison came about because both empires destroyed the Jerusalem temple.

70 Greg Carey, “The Book of Revelation as Counter-Imperial Script,” in *In the Shadow of Empire: Reclaiming the Bible as a History of Faithful Resistance*, ed. Richard Horsley (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008), 167.

only serves to ensure its total demise. Because of this, the four kingdoms motif is turned into a “one kingdom” motif.

Both texts also do away with the animal/human binary that was so explicit in the earlier, Greek period texts. The beast’s ten horns fight against an opponent known as the Lamb, who is the “Lord of lords and King of kings” (Rev 17:14). The Lamb, of course, symbolizes the messiah. Similarly, in 4 Ezra, a lion foretells the death of the eagle (11:45–46). The lion is similarly identified as the messiah (4 Ezra 12:32). Unlike Daniel 7’s son of man, the Testament of Naphtali’s Joseph, or the Animal Apocalypse’s shepherds and white men, the entities that signal the end of empire are *not* depicted as humans.⁷¹ Instead, the entities—the lion and the lamb—that stand in opposition to the empire are much more like the beastly empires. In fact, 4 Ezra’s lion, much like the eagle, is a bit of a hybrid, having a man’s voice (4 Ezra 11:37). Revelation’s lamb, like the beast it goes to war with, has horns as well as multiple eyes (Rev 5:6).

6 Conclusion

By paying attention to the four kingdoms, we gain insight into how the paradigm was replicated to speak about empire in different texts in early Judaism. But, more significantly, we see how changes to the paradigm signal a shift in the way the imperial phenomenon was conceived. The understanding of the four empires of Daniel 7, the Testament of Naphtali and the Animal Apocalypse could not be sustained in the Roman period. Perhaps Rome was just too powerful or the destruction of the Second Temple and the loss of the Roman Revolt were too traumatic. Whatever the reasons, the authors of 4 Ezra and Revelation chose to portray empire as one, collective kingdom.

Additionally, by paying heed to the animal imagery incorporated into the four kingdoms motif, we see that, as Lévi-Strauss argued, animals are “good to think” with. All of these writers share a common set of imagery—empires were unnatural and fearsome beasts unlike any in the known world. This is precisely what a discourse does—it governs the production of truth in a society.⁷² This discourse was able to imagine new creatures. Some were based on the animals encountered by an agricultural society⁷³ and others, like the eagle, mimicked

71 Although there is a parallel to the son of man in Rev 14:14 who flies with the clouds of heaven, the chapter is not contextually related to Revelation 13 (Poon, *Identities*, 56).

72 Frilingos, *Spectacle*, 9.

73 Stone, *Reading*, 117–139.

the very images of imperialism itself.⁷⁴ Empire as a phenomenon is nowhere conceptualized as one, particular animal. Even the Animal Apocalypse, which uses the most straightforward animal depictions, characterizes empires variously as lions, leopards, eagles, vultures, kites, and ravens. The depictions of empires are all quite literally hybrids—a mixture of beasts—as well as hybrid products that appear to “affirm the authority of the dominant culture ... but at another level by creating something inevitably different it unsettles and even mocks the supposed superiority of the colonial/imperial power.”⁷⁵ In other words, this animal discourse is playing into the empire’s own view of itself—of course, it *is* powerful—but by distorting the beastly images, these texts undermine that power. Not coincidentally, this is how the four kingdoms motif itself works. In its original formation by the Persians, it was intended to convey that Persian universal rule was inevitable as it followed on the heels of Assyria and Media. The Romans ended up doing the same, adding themselves and the earlier Greeks to the series.⁷⁶ As we have seen, however, when Jewish writers got ahold of this motif, they introduced a different ending—a divine kingdom that would usurp power—and, in this way, they changed a motif that served as imperial propaganda into anti-imperial rhetoric.⁷⁷

The writers also created truth with this discourse by complicating the animal-human binary. In writing about resistance to hegemony in Daniel and the Animal Apocalypse, Anatheia Portier-Young argues, “the very binary nature

74 Another example is to be found in the image of the lion, which was often identified with the king in the ancient Near East. The biblical text pointedly does not make this association, but displaces the imagery, portraying instead the lion as Yahweh. See Brent A. Strawn, *What Is Stronger Than a Lion? Leonine Image and Metaphor in the Hebrew Bible and the Ancient Near East*, OBO 212 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht; Fribourg: Academic Press, 2005), 152–186.

75 John M. G. Barclay, *Against Apion: Translation and Commentary*, vol. 10 of *Flavius Josephus: Translation and Commentary*, ed. Steve Mason (Leiden: Brill, 2007), lxix. R. S. Sugirtharajah puts it similarly, “The pure duality of hegemony, then, becomes a hybridity, since the sub-alterns’ mimicry of hegemony can also be an appropriation, and hybridity can become a site of resistance against colonial authority as mimicry turns into mockery” (*Exploring Postcolonial Biblical Criticism: History, Method, Practice* [Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012], 15).

76 Brennan W. Breed, “Daniel’s Four Kingdoms Schema: A History of Re-writing World History,” *Int* 71 (2017): 178–89, esp. 181–82. This is apparent in the writings of Ctesias, a Greek physician working in the Persian court of Artaxerxes II in the beginning of the fourth century BCE, who chronicled the order of the imperial powers as the Assyrians, Medes and Persians (Diodorus Siculus, *Library of History* 2.1–34). Similarly, Herodotus, in the fifth century BCE, includes a sequence of Assyrians, Medes and Persians (Herodotus, *Histories* 1.95, 130) to illustrate Cyrus’s rise to power.

77 Breed, “Daniel’s Four Kingdoms Schema,” 182.

of the hegemonic construction of reality ...(inside/outside, center/periphery, good/bad, civilized/barbaric, normal/aberrant) also creates the possibility for resistance to hegemony through critical inversion, wherein categories are retained but the hierarchy of values or assignment of value is turned upside down.⁷⁸ The example she gives is that of the Christian cross, which was transformed from a symbol of death to a symbol of redemption from death. This is what happens in Daniel, the Testament of Naphtali, and the Animal Apocalypse with the two, parallel binaries of animal/human and empire/subjugated. All three texts maintain a distinction between human and animal, but the binary of empire/subjugated is consistently inverted. To use Portier-Young's categories, the empire, despite what imperial ideology might want to convey, is an animal and as such it is barbaric, not civilized, it is aberrant, not normal, and it is bad, not good. Most significantly, since the human (i.e., the representation of a divine entity) brings about the end of the fearsome beast, imperial power is up-ended; the empire is weak whereas the subjugated Jewish people and their God are strong.

In the two Roman period texts, however, the binary between animal and human is removed. If the hegemonic construction of reality is based on binaries, then the authors of Revelation and 4 Ezra have dissolved the reality of an imperial world entirely. The empire and the Jewish people are both animals. They are on the same playing field, if you will. Moreover, by collapsing the four beasts into one, then that one beast is necessarily all-encompassing. Thus, the eagle and the beast with the whore are, in a sense, larger than life. However, the final lesson of the four kingdom qua one kingdom motif seems to be that the larger they are, the harder they fall.

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78 Portier-Young, *Apocalypse Against Empire*, 14.

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The Apocalypse of Weeks: Periodization and Tradition-Historical Context

Loren T. Stuckenbruck

1 Introduction

The organization of time was undoubtedly a central concern in the Apocalypse of Weeks (hereafter, AW). This work is preserved among Enochic writings most fully collected in the Ge'ez *Māṣḥafā Henok*, or 1 Enoch. As is well known, AW is split up in the Ge'ez text tradition into two parts that are out of sequence, with the first part in 1 En. 93:1–10 and the second prior to it, in 91:10–17. While the original order was long apparent on source-critical grounds, it was confirmed with the publication of Dead Sea fragments to the text in Aramaic from 4Q212, a manuscript datable to the first century BCE.¹ Though contiguous to (4Q212) and within (so the Ge'ez) two other works composed just before the mid-second century BCE (the Epistle of Enoch, 1 En. 92:1–5 + 93:11–105:2 and Exhortation at 91:1–10 + 91:18–19), both the setting and date of AW are by no means secondary; indeed, it may have been composed just prior to the outbreak of the Maccabean revolt (i.e., before 167 BCE) in the wake of the growing socio-political and religious conflict with the Seleucids and Hellenistic reforms taking place in Jerusalem.² If this date holds, then AW, which antedates both the Animal Apocalypse (1 En. 85–90) and the Book of Daniel (chs. 7–12), is one of the earliest, if not the earliest “historical” apocalypse of Jewish tradition. As such, and in the context of the present volume’s focus on the four kingdoms, it merits a closer look.

While the four beasts in Daniel 7 focus on powers that dominated the Levant from the early-sixth century to the first half of the second century BCE, AW, as the Animal Apocalypse considered history more widely, from the beginning of humankind all the way to the eschaton and even beyond. If one were to imagine how Danielic traditions, whether the book itself or related literature (e.g., the so-called “Pseudo Daniel” texts in 4Q243–245), located themselves within

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- 1 J. T. Milik, *The Books of Enoch: Aramaic Fragments from Qumrān Cave 4* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1976), 245–72 (and plates XXI–XXIV). Despite some scholarly debate regarding the sequence of AW in the Aramaic, Milik’s reconstruction of the 4Q212 can be confirmed. See the discussion in Loren T. Stuckenbruck, *1 Enoch 91–108*, CEJL (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2007), 50–52.
 - 2 Stuckenbruck, *1 Enoch 91–108*, 60–62 (and bibliography in n. 112).

a wider scheme of ideal history, then the Enochic texts may provide an initial point of departure. The Apocalypse of Weeks, in turn, no doubt took over existing traditions and, alternatively, played a role in shaping other Second Temple textual tradition that, at the same time, fell heir to the four kingdom scheme (see the brief look at Sib. Or. 4 below). Before making a few observations on the ten-week structuring of time in AW, I would like to offer an outline of the work that in large part covers most of its content as well.

2 Outline and Overview

An overview of AW is achieved by recounting its self-presentation in the following terms: the period in question (column 1); events associated with that period (column 2—for eras two through six identified in brackets with more conventional designations); and the way these events are characterized (column 3).³

TABLE 1 Time structures and historiographical frameworks in the Apocalypse of weeks

(1) Era/"Week"	(2) Events	(3) Character
	(<i>PAST</i>)	
ONE (93:3)	Birth of Enoch (7th part)	Justice and righteousness
TWO (93:4)	Rise of evil; sprouting of deceit	Evil
	The "first end" (Great Flood)	Judgment
	A man (Noah) rescued	Deliverance
	Increase of iniquity	Evil
	Law given for sinners	Expedient law
THREE (93:5)	A man (Abraham) chosen as plant of righteousness	Election and righteousness
FOUR (93:6)	Visions of holy and righteous ones	Permanent law
	Law given for every generation (Torah)	
	Enclosure made for them (tabernacle)	
FIVE (93:7)	House of glory and royalty/ kingdom built (pass. div.) for eternity (Temple)	Permanent temple A

3 Adapted from Stuckenbruck, *1 Enoch 91–108*, 57–58.

TABLE 1 Time structures and historiographical frameworks (*cont.*)

(1) Era/"Week"	(2) Events	(3) Character
SIX (93:8)	The blind fall away from wisdom A man (Elijah) ascends House of royalty/kingdom burned The chosen root scattered	Evil Deliverance Evil Evil
SEVEN A (93:9–10)	(<i>PAST-PRESENT</i>) Rise of wicked generation Election of the chosen righteous from eternal plant of righteousness Sevenfold instruction on the entire creation	Evil Election and righteousness
SEVEN B (91:11)	(<i>FUTURE</i>) Uprooting of oppression Destruction of sinners	Judgment
EIGHT (91:12–13)	Judgment on oppressors and sinners by the righteous Righteous obtain wealth/possessions Temple of the Great King built in glory forever	Judgment Reward Permanent temple B
NINE (91:14)	Revelation of righteous judgment to the whole world Works of the wicked recorded for destruction All people look to the way of righteousness	Judgment Righteousness
TEN (91:15–16)	Eternal judgment (7th part) Judgment against watchers and among angels Disappearance of the first heaven Creation of a new heaven Every heavenly power shines sevenfold forever	Permanent judgment Permanent destruction New cosmos
WEEKS WITHOUT NUMBER (93:17)	Goodness and righteousness Memory of sin erased	Permanent cosmic order

The time covered in AW is comprehensive: it embraces events spanning from the primordial era before the great flood all the way up to and even beyond the eschatological future. The putative author, Enoch, is made to tell the story, most of which is presented as future from his perspective. The measured part of history is divided into ten “weeks.” The term, which draws attention to the principled significance of the number seven, denotes predetermined periods of time, whether or not they are to be understood as equal in some way.⁴ Within this scheme, AW is highly selective in choosing from a number of larger pools of possibilities. Its brief descriptions of events to occur in each week mark out in one or, at most, two sentences one or more occurrences that are deemed to be either bad or good and, thus, are implicitly exhortational. The events, which reflect matters of particular concern to the writer, reflect something of what the writer regards as the ideal community, as indicated by the nomenclature “plant of righteousness” in weeks three and seven. The text assumes an audience’s knowledge of more events than are actually narrated, and so underscores the sacredness of those that are included. For example, while there is no mention of the creation story in the first week, passing references to the created order in weeks seven (93:10) and ten (91:16) presuppose the creation account of which implied hearers and readers would already be aware. The selectivity of the narrative is also enhanced by the account’s two-fold reference to a “seventh” part in weeks one (93:3) and ten (91:15). These parts of those weeks—that is, not others which remain untold—are of particular import, while the text may assume that all ten periods can be subdivided in this way. This zeroing into smaller units is surely deliberate: the selection of Enoch’s birth in 1 En. 93:3 locates the fictive author near the beginning of the grand narrative of redemptive history, while the focus on “eternal judgment” in the seventh part of week ten brings this sacred history to a conclusion that embraces the entire cosmos.

4 Cf. Klaus Koch, “Von der Sabbatstruktur der Geschichte: die sogenannte Zehn-Wochen-Apokalypse (1Hen 93,1–10; 91,11–17) und das Ringen um die alttestamentlichen Chronologien im späten Israelitentum,” *ZAW* 95 (1983): 403–30 (here, 429–30), who has argued that each of the weeks in this text consist of equally divided 490-year periods; and similarly, Devorah Dimant, “The Seventy Weeks Chronology (Dan. 9:24–27) in the Light of New Qumranic Texts,” in A. S. van der Woude, *The Book of Daniel in the Light of New Findings*, BETL 106 (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1993), 57–76 (esp. 66–67).

3 The Ten-Week Scheme and Its Immediate Tradition-Historical Context

The Apocalypse of Weeks is not the only section within 1 Enoch, as we received it in the Ge'ez text tradition, that covers sacred history. *Prima facie*, the Animal Vision (1 En. 85:1–90:42) does the same, though it (a) goes into more detail, (b) is dominated by zoomorphic images, (c) does not partition the entire story into numbered eras, and (d) makes no mention of an unlimited period following the end. Beyond this, the Animal Vision devotes far more attention to the activities of oppressive regimes of inimical powers, both cosmic (e.g., the 70 disciplining “shepherds” in 89:59–77, and 90:1, 19, 22, 25) and political (e.g., various wild animals, prominently eagles in 90:1–18). Finally, the Animal Vision is much less explicit than AW about its structure; it is left to an audience to infer more precisely when the angelic figures are active in the narrative and, coordinated with them, when socio-religious and political circumstances take place. It remains that no scheme within the narrative is readily subject to a numbered sequence.⁵ Nevertheless, and despite the different lengths of the AW and the Animal Vision, there are a number of overlaps in theme and content,⁶ though these in turn expose several very real differences between the two works.⁷

5 The seventy shepherds are not introduced until the time of the exile (1 En. 89:59), so that the entire account is only covered from them until the time of eschatological judgment. In any case, they are correlated with punishing activities (89:60) and represent a period of time as a group of thirty-five, each of whom act singly in a time assigned to them (90:1–2a); cf. Antti Laato, “The Chronology in the Animal Apocalypse of 1 Enoch 85–90,” *JSP* 26 (2016): 3–19.

6 For a listing of comparable motifs in the two works—with references to parallels in Damascus Document (CD 2–6), Jubilees (esp. 23:12–31), Community Rule (1QS 8–9), and Daniel 11:14—see George W. E. Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001), 398–400.

7 A number of the events and characters mentioned in AW are not found in the Animal Vision: e.g., in AW there is no messianic figure, nor are there references in the latter to the birth of Enoch, the law, a figure equivalent to Elijah, and weeks without end. One wonders, then, whether the almost contemporary Enochic authors would have recognized one another as legitimate heirs to the Enochic tradition. This possibility, taking 1 En. 104:10–12 as a point of departure, has not been adequately considered thus far and goes beyond my comments in Stuckenbruck, *1 Enoch 91–108*, 582–605; and Loren T. Stuckenbruck, “Reflections on Sources Behind the Epistle of Enoch and the Significance of 1 Enoch 104:9–13 for the Reception of Enochic Tradition,” in *A Teacher for All Generations: Essays in Honor of James C. VanderKam*, ed. Eric F. Mason et al., *JJS* 153/2 (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 2:705–14 (here 713).

As the outline presented above indicates, the most important numbers in AW are *ten* and *seven*,⁸ with the latter implied by the repeated use of “week” as the overriding designation for each era. The final era, which is neither designated as an “eleventh” nor constitutes a measurable era, is simply designated “weeks without number” (91:17). While this concluding phase is portrayed as numberless and expresses a certain infinitude, the continued description of it in terms of “weeks” suggests that the importance of the number “seven,” as endemic to the created order, does not disappear.

3.1 *Parallels to the Ten-Fold Scheme of History in the Apocalypse of Weeks*

John Collins,⁹ noting a possible derivation from “the Persian idea of the millennium,”¹⁰ mentions a series of analogous schemes in Second Temple Jewish sources, among which it is, in my view, difficult to draw anything more than a loose connection. It remains of interest, however, that this ten-fold periodization does not stand alone, and could readily be combined with others. One collection of sources in which this occurs, is the Sibylline Oracles books 1–2 (1.65–124 and 283–323; 2.6–38) and 4 (49–101). The vestiges of the ten generations in Sibylline Oracles books 1 and 2, a Second Temple composition reworked by later Christian interpolators, conspicuously differ from the scheme of AW, even though they *prima facie* also assign a series of events to the eschaton. For example, the figure of Noah is assigned to the fifth era (in AW, Noah is in the second week), and eschatological events are saved for the tenth (whereas in AW, they begin during the seventh). In Sibylline Oracles book 4, ten eras are combined with the four kingdom scheme: they are divided into six generations under Assyrian rule (4.49–53), with two following under the Medes (54–64), one under the Persians (65–87), and a final tenth generation under the Greek or Macedonians (88–101). The writer’s present, which may be assigned to the aftermath of the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple in 70 CE, correlates to the time of the Roman Empire, which lies outside the ten-fold

8 There is no hint of a four kingdom scheme in AW. Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch* 1, 440, states that “the author of the Apocalypse of Weeks stands in a firmly established and broad apocalyptic tradition of structuring history using the numbers seven and ten.” While vestiges of the combination occur in several apocalyptic texts, this does not apply to the passages from Sibylline Oracles 1–2 and 4 noted below.

9 John J. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016), 80–81.

10 A ten-fold division of history is preserved throughout the *Bhaman Yasht* (*Zand-ī Vohūman Yasn*); cf. John J. Collins, “Sibylline Oracles,” *OTP*, ed. James H. Charlesworth (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1983), 1:332 and 345; and the earlier study by David Flusser, “The Four Empires in the Fourth Sybil and in the Book of Daniel,” *IOS* 2 (1972): 148–75.

scheme.¹¹ This scheme applies to the past up until the present, and anticipates an eschatological judgment heralded by the volcanic eruption of Mount Vesuvius. Although the inclusion of the Roman Empire suggests the adaptation of an older four kingdom ten generation scheme, there is no obvious influence from either Daniel or AW which, unlike book 4, envision the establishment of God's rule. In addition, whereas in Daniel 7 the first kingdom is Babylon (not Assyria) and the divine kingdom follows the fourth kingdom (without reference to a ten-era scheme), in AW, in which there is no four kingdom scheme, the eschatological reign of God is placed *within* the eighth week.¹²

Another, though very fragmentary source is the so-called Peshier of the Periods preserved in 4Q180–181.¹³ The number “ten” occurs in 4Q180 1 2 where the text states, “un]til he begat Isaac; ten h[” (cf. the small parallel 4Q181 2 1, “he begat] Isaac”). This uncertain reference to “ten” may have in mind a period of ten generations between Noah (who is unnamed) and Abraham, who is clearly the progenitor of Isaac. Perhaps significant is the possible mention of “seventy weeks” in 4Q181 2 3¹⁴—this period would refer to the time during which ‘Asa’el and the angels led Israel astray’—which may, as implied in AW, reflect a combination of ten and seventy within the periodized scheme. The tenth era in 4Q180–181, if it is to be understood as such, then, and very much unlike AW, pertains to an era of the writer’s remote past.

11QMelchizedek (11Q13) ii 7–8 seems more relevant. The text, having mentioned a ninth jubilee, refers to a “da]y of atonement” that will occur at “the e[nd of] the tenth [ju]bilee.” Again, there is a combination of an overarching number of ten which, as a jubilee, is further divisible into forty-nine, a multiple of seven. In addition, as in AW, the tenth period/jubilee is eschatological,¹⁵ though in AW the eschatological period already begins in the middle of week seven. In this respect, it is interesting that the writer behind AW apportions the eschatological future differently; it does not invest the entire eschatological future in week seven, but extends it through and beyond a tenth week.

11 Cf. John J. Collins, *Apocalypse, Prophecy, and Pseudepigraphy: On Jewish Apocalyptic Literature* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015), 108–26 (here 118–22).

12 Therefore, it is difficult to posit that Sib. Or. 4 has taken over its scheme from AW in any direct way.

13 Cf. Milik, *The Books of Enoch*, 248–50, who plausibly argued that these manuscript fragments belong to the same work, though doubt on assuming this was questioned by Devorah Dimant, “The ‘Peshier on the Periods’ (4Q180) and 4Q181,” in *IOS* 9 (1979): 77–102.

14 The text (with **השביע שבעים**) could mean either “he satisfied (Israel) seventy times” or “(Israel) seventy weeks.”

15 Moreover, “the last age” referred to in Vergil’s *Eclogae* 4.4 is interpreted by a later commentary of Servius (400 CE) as “the tenth.”

3.1.1 The Structural Significance of “Seven” in the Ten-Week Framework
 The number “seven,” including its multiples, is significant in AW in at least three ways. First, the text of AW implies the number seventy. The scheme of ten weeks, as mentioned, is predicated on the more detailed scheme of each week being divided into a further seven: ten weeks times seven parts in each, amounting to seventy parts (so week one part seven, “Enoch’s birth” [93:3]; week ten part seven, “the eternal judgment” [91:15]). The influence behind such a seventy-period scheme is unknown, nor can it be inferred that these sub-eras are assumed in the text to have been of equal duration.¹⁶ It is possible that AW is receiving and interpreting the Book of Watchers at 1 En. 10:12, which mentions that the rebellious angels are to be bound “for seventy generations,”¹⁷ a period which spans from the time of the Flood when the rebellious angels are bound to the final judgment. However, these seventy generations correspond to AW weeks two (beginning with “the first end”) through ten (when the watchers are judged). There is, then, not a precise fit between the two texts, since AW covers the antediluvian period as well.

Several writings in the Hebrew Bible also show an interest in the number seventy for the structuring of time. Well known is the reference in Jeremiah to “seventy years” as the period of duration for the Babylonian exile (Jer 25:11–12; 29:10). Similarly, in Zech 1:12–17 a duration of seventy years is applied to the Temple’s ruined state (cf. also Zech 7:5), with the text adding that after this the Temple will be rebuilt (Zech 1:16). Seventy years are also mentioned in 2 Chr 36:21, though there they are referred to as “seventy years of rest” in the land. Thus the Jeremican prophecy that focuses on the exile from the land and the Chronicler’s emphasis on rest in the land stand at odds.

In Daniel chapter 9, which was composed perhaps just a few years after AW, the seventy years of Jeremiah (Dan 9:2) are explicitly reinterpreted as seventy “weeks of years” (Dan 9:24). Yet, though the prophecy in Daniel 9 expressly appeals to Jeremiah’s seventy years, Michael Segal has questioned whether the seventy weeks of years (i.e., 490) include Jeremiah’s seventy or, in fact, begin with the imagined time of Daniel himself, just prior to the edict of Cyrus.¹⁸ If Daniel 9 has in view 490 years that extend from the exile, beginning in 586 BCE,

16 See n. 2 above. On the periodization of history into fixed times in Persian systems, Daniel 2 and 7, Hesiod’s *Theogony* and *Works and Days* and Berossos, as noted, for example, by Martin Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism: Studies in Their Encounter in Palestine during the Early Hellenistic Period*, trans. John Bowden (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974), 1:181–96.

17 Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, 81.

18 Michael Segal, *Dreams, Riddles, and Visions: Textual, Contextual, and Intertextual Approaches to the Book of Daniel*, BZAW 455 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2016), 155–79. As Segal reconstructs, the “seven weeks” (49 years following Daniel’s prophecy) lead from the

then the writer's present, which corresponded to the end of the sixty-second week, is some 434 years later, with him anticipating a further seven times seven years (49; cf. Dan 9:25). However, if the 490 years begin with the putative time of Daniel, then the sixty-second week calculates to somewhere around the turn of the first century BCE. It seems clear that neither construal of Danielic chronology has had an impact on that of AW. Nevertheless, similar to Daniel, AW applies a scheme that appeals to the past in order to project upon the future, a future that, from both real authors' perspective, leaves a period of time for anticipated divine interventions to take place.

In the other almost contemporary Enochic composition, the Animal Vision, as mentioned above, the number seventy denotes shepherds appointed to rule from the precarious time of exile (associated with Jehoiakim) until the eschaton (cf. 1 En. 89:59–64). It is unclear, though, whether the Animal Vision implies a division into seventy time-units, because its periodization of time correlates more readily to a four-fold scheme of successive phases: (1) the exile (1 En. 89:65–72a), (2) Persian rule (89:72b–90:1), (3) Ptolemaic rule (90:2–5), and (4) the Seleucid rule of the writer's present (90:6–12).¹⁹ Here, the Animal Vision, in weaving an implicit four kingdom pattern into the period of seventy shepherds, ends up with an asymmetrical scheme that is less unambiguously set out than that of AW.

It is also possible that the "seventy weeks" in the Peshier on the Periods (see 4Q181 2 3) are 490 years of straying that, similar to AW at 1 En. 93:2, are "engraved on the [heavenly/eternal] tablets" (so 4Q180 1 1, 3).²⁰ If the smaller divisions of time of ten periods within the seventy weeks consist of ten jubilees each, then the periods of forty-nine years can be integrated into the seventy weeks' scheme. Such a confluence of ten and seventy would compare to AW, though the way it is worked out is independent, with AW not apparently assigning a definite and consistent period of years to each "week."²¹ While

putative time of Daniel's prophecy until the advent of an "anointed prince," who can be associated with Nehemiah and his activities.

19 See n. 5 above and, further, Patrick A. Tiller, *A Commentary on the Animal Apocalypse of 1 Enoch*, EJL 4 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993), 324–57.

20 This only works under the assumption that 4Q180 and 4Q181 are manuscripts preserving the same work. See bibliography in n. 13 above.

21 Contra John Sietze Bergsma, *The Jubilees from Leviticus to Qumran: A History of Interpretation*, VTSup 115 (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 238–42, drawing on Koch, "Von der Sabbatstruktur der Geschichte," 403–430; cf. Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch*, 440 (such for the first seven weeks). The conforming of the weeks to the same periods of time seems, however, forced; cf. James C. VanderKam, *Calendars in the Dead Sea Scrolls*, LDSS (London: Routledge, 1998), 99: "the author does not assign a uniform length of time to each of his weeks, since they seem to cover differing numbers of years in the biblical story."

structurally analogous, the comparison is superficial; the scheme inferred from the very fragmentary 4Q180 and 4Q181, to the degree that it can be thought as such, covers a series of much shorter ten-fold durations. In addition, a scheme of ten is fit into a larger framework of “weeks,” while in AW it is a scheme of seven parts that is fit into the larger framework of (ten) “weeks.” It is this reading of 490 years as a time of straying in 4Q180 with 4Q181 that fits well in relation to frameworks found in other Hebrew texts among the Dead Sea Scrolls,²² while AW remains distinct.

A final text to consider is the Damascus Document. Similar to Daniel 9, it has been thought to draw on a 490-year scheme (of seventy weeks of years).²³ In the Damascus Document, however, reference to such an era, which clearly begins with the start of the exile (4Q266 i 6–7), is at best only implicit. It relies on the sum of eras expressly mentioned in the text (390 years,²⁴ plus twenty years of “groping for the way,”²⁵ plus a period of the Teacher of Righteousness’s activity), along with a further “forty years” following the Teacher’s death to the destruction of those allied with the Man of the Lie (CD B 20:15). It is only if the period of the Teacher’s activity is estimated at forty years that the periods add up to 490.

While a purported 490-year scheme cannot be said to apply to periodization within AW as a whole, a correspondence may be inferred in a more limited sense. Apocalypse of Weeks may presuppose a 490-year scheme within (i.e.,

22 Perhaps closer to Peshier on the Periods are two further texts. One is the so-called Apocryphon of Jeremiah (4Q383–384, 385a–b, 387b, 389a), which refers to “ten jubilees of years” (ten times forty-nine, i.e., 490 years) as a period characterized by walking “in madness, blindness, and confusion” (4Q387b 2 ii 3–4 // 4Q385a 4 1). The other text is 4Q390, designated Pseudo Moses by Devorah Dimant, “The Seventy Weeks Chronology,” 57–76. This text appears to subdivide a scheme of 490 years into four periods, similar to the Animal Vision reviewed above. These periods seem to derive from references in 4Q390 to (1) seventy years of waywardness during the exile by the Aaronic priesthood (1 2–3); (2) a period lasting until the seventh jubilee (343 years) after the destruction of the First Temple (1 7–8); (3) seven (i.e., a week of) years during which the priesthood forgot “the statute,” “the festival,” “the Sabbath,” and “the covenant,” when as a result the Jews were handed over to persecution by Antiochus (1 8, 2 i 4); and (4) seventy years of Hasmonean rule associated with “the angels of Mastema” (2 i 6–7). On these 490-year and related schemes, see Cana Werman, “Epochs and End-Time: The 490-Year Scheme in Second Temple Literature,” *DSD* 13 (2006): 229–55.

23 See Hanan Eshel, *Exploring the Dead Sea Scrolls: Archaeology and the Literature of the Qumran Caves*, ed. Shani Tzoref and Barnea Levi Selavan, *JAJSup* 18 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2015), 53–60 (with bibliography on 53 n. 34), who admits that the influence of the 490-year chronology in the Damascus Document is “speculative.”

24 Cf. the interpretation of 390 days as years in Ezek 4:5, from which the number in the Damascus Document in CD 1:5–6 (called “the era of wrath”) is derived.

25 CD 1:9–10 // 4Q266 2 i 13.

for part of) the seventh week (1 En. 93:9–10), which begins with the exile (so 1 En. 93:8) and extends into and just beyond the text's present. That, in turn, would not be far off from the way Daniel 9 has applied the scheme (i.e., if the text construes the period with the beginning of the exile), with the present of the real author coming *during* and *towards the end* of such a period.

3.1.2 The Number "Seven" as a Fulcrum Figure in Enochic Tradition

Second, the number seven is significant as an ordinal for the pivotal period in the sacred history: the seventh week. Although "Enoch" is fictively used to "predict" the entire history following week one, the writer attributes events until the middle of week seven to his own past, while describing events future to his time from the middle of the seventh and on. Week seven marks the crucial transition from *recent past* to *present* to *imminent future*, from the rise of a "wicked generation" (1 En. 93:9) to the election of "the chosen righteous ones" (93:10) to an imminent destruction of sinners by the sword (91:11). This week receives the lengthiest treatment in the work and also correlates to the writer's time, when evil and revelation collide, with those having the latter coming into a position of exercising retributive justice.

3.1.3 Figures of "Seven" and the Space between Present and Future

Third, the number seven occurs twice in the term "sevenfold," as found in weeks seven and ten. The expression is related to conditions in the real author's present and ultimate future. The text situates itself in a time when a special disclosure has and is taking place. This disclosure, or better, revelatory knowledge concerns "the whole of his (God's) creation." Significantly, it has its foundation in the past, beginning with the election of Abraham as the "plant of righteousness" in week three (1 En. 93:4), and anticipates the final salvific state of the cosmos when "every power of the heavens will shine sevenfold forever" (91:16). Those to whom the instruction is given are described in terms reminiscent of Abraham, "the chosen plant of righteousness," though with even more emphatic language: according to the Ge'ez version,²⁶ "there will be chosen the chosen righteous ones from the eternal plant of righteousness" (93:10), who are no doubt a select group of Jews comprising a matrix within which and out of which the righteous will ultimately be identified.²⁷ While the "eternal plant of righteousness" refers to the larger socio-religious matrix that derives from and reaches back to Abraham (Israel at large), the specially chosen ones denote a

26 The manuscript tradition is fairly stable at this point, with the textual variants not departing much from this sense.

27 It is not certain that the text reflects a narrowly formed community.

more narrowly defined group that, in principle, remains an “open” community to whom revelation is being made available. The content of the revelation is vague; in place of “concerning the whole of his creation” in the Ge‘ez version, the only slightly restored text in the Aramaic (4QEn^g [4Q212] 1 iv 12–13) reads: “c[hosen one]s [w]ill be chosen as witnesses of truth from the etern[al] pl[ant of] truth/righteousness, to whom sevenf[old] wisdom and knowledge will be giv[e]n.”²⁸ The seven-fold knowledge denotes the complete sufficiency of revelation for the elect community and, though not yet fully implemented, anticipates the reversal from wickedness narrated in the second part of the seventh week when the wicked will be punished. The “seven-fold” shining in week ten thus describes the cosmic outcome of this revelation, with judgment occurring in reverse order: once the eternal judgment *has been executed*, the heavenly bodies will shine forever (1 En. 91:15–16).

The periodization of AW thus has much in common with schemes found in other Second Temple literature. However, it remains distinct in the way it combines the ideal numbers of ten and seven (and its derivatives), so that it is difficult to speak of traditions that have either influenced AW directly or have been influenced by it. At the same time, the way AW relates the real author’s present to events of the recent past as a time of revelation reflects a wider pattern not uncommon to some Jewish apocalyptic texts. This claim leads to a final reflection immediately below.

4 Conclusion

One may close with a brief comparison between the seventh week in AW, the Animal Vision, and the four kingdoms of Daniel 7, as the time of these writings are roughly contemporary (composed within a period of ten years of one another) and, taken together, illustrate a nexus of ideas. In some sense, the Animal Vision, with its integration of an implied four kingdom scheme (1 En. 89:65–90:12), encased within a period covered by the seventy shepherds

28 The revelation of knowledge or insight in the present as a prelude to the future is similarly found in Dan 12:3: “those who instruct” (*maskilim*) and “those who make many righteous” (*mašdiqe ha-rabim*) in the present are, together with those they lead (“the many”), will be rewarded as they “shine in the shining of the sky” and become “as stars for eternity” (cf. the confluence of similar themes in the Epistle of Enoch at 1 En. 104–105). See similarly *Musar le-Mevin*, in which God has already opened “insight” for the one being instructed (presumably as is also the case for his other instructors and the instructor of the text), with the “eternal planting” applying to the community of elect who are aligned with “holy ones” in whose inheritance they possibly share (4Q418 81 1–14).

(89:51–90:27), may be regarded as an intermediary between the book of Daniel (in which the four kingdoms, presented as beasts, are explicit) and AW (in which time is covered more comprehensively). What remains comparable in all three, however, is these writings' inclusion of the period extending from the beginning of the exile until the time of composition and into the imminent future. The Animal Vision covers this period with the seventy shepherds and the mention of four oppressive powers, and it is during the last rule that the eyes of the sheep began to be opened (1 En. 90:9–10), and a form of religious resistance takes hold that sets into motion events that the text believes will lead to divine judgment in the near future. Daniel 7 covers this period in two separate segments: in one, four kingdoms are described as beasts (7:1–8, 17, 19–21, 23–25) and, while the depiction of the first three implies conflicts with Israel, it is with the fourth, arising during the time Daniel 7 was composed, that the clash reaches its zenith, one that is already underway. Here, the writer of the Danielic Aramaic text presupposes the contemporary existence of “holy ones” in Israel (7:18, 21, 27) and anticipates divine judgment against the fourth kingdom (and its ruler; 7:26–27). In AW, such interests are in play, but seem much more focused on the internal politics among Jewish communities of Judea and beyond. If AW is read in tandem with the Epistle of Enoch (cf. 1 En. 97:3–4; 105:12–15), AW applies “sinners” as much, if not more, to other Jews who are complicit or associate themselves with the oppressive activities of non-Jewish rule as it does to those powers themselves (while Daniel and the Animal Vision focus on the oppressiveness of foreign rule).²⁹

With regard to the present, all three writings situate themselves in a time towards the end of a critical period, not only because that period is depicted as a crisis (rise of evil, persecution, military conflict), but also because in the present, at least for the writers, a definable community—the receptacle of divine activity—is given to play a key role. In the Animal Vision and AW, this community has already been subject to revelation (“their eyes were opened” in the former (1 En. 90:9–10) and “knowledge and wisdom about the whole of creation” in the latter (93:10), while in Daniel the ideal community is simply referred to as “the holy ones of the Most High,” against whom the horn (kingdom) of the fourth beast kingdom prevails (Dan 7:21). In other words, even though the seventh week in AW is not explicitly broken down into sub-units *per se*, its correspondence to the period covered by the four kingdoms of Daniel 7 and the Animal Vision, demonstrates that the ideal righteous community of the present stands at the pinnacle of the calculated period of time,

29 On the profile of “sinners” in the Epistle and AW, see Stuckenbruck, *1 Enoch 91–108*, 64–65 and 191–204.

poised to embrace a future in which the inaugurated salvific and revelatory activity of God on their behalf will manifest itself in full justice with retribution and reward. Thus, rather than being overwhelmed by a certain hopelessness in the face of oppressive powers (whether political or religious), these writings, composed between just prior to and during the Maccabean war, found reassurance in the establishment of a religious community that will culminate in eschatological judgment.

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Expressions of Empire and Four Kingdoms Patterns in the Aramaic Dead Sea Scrolls

Andrew B. Perrin

1 The Ongoing History of the Four Kingdoms*

As archaeologists sift through layers of forgotten ancient sites they often aim to detect social, political, and cultural shifts reflected in the rubble and remains of the material finds buried beneath. Discernable changes in the stratum of a site at times tell tales of dramatic upheavals, displacement, destruction, or re-occupation. In many instances, these layers attest to clashes of peoples existing under and against the long chain of empires that ruled from the Mediterranean basin to modern day India. One after another, powers ascended, expanded, and inevitably toppled to the emerging empire on deck. Empires, however, not only impacted physical landscapes and cultural heritage but also left impressions on the literary imaginations of ancient scribes and communities.

One prominent way writers reflected on their relation to the imperial powers of the past, present, and future was by fitting world history into four kingdoms schemes. Ancient texts featuring this motif reveal a conceptual and chronological stratigraphy, idealized and ideologically charged historiographies, and the diverse responses, reactions, and reflections of cultures clashing with overturning empires. In short, akin to the tells excavated by archaeologists, four kingdoms chronologies in ancient literature reflect memories of social, political, and cultural transitions through tiers of time.

When put in the panoramic perspective of writings across cultures and corpora, it is clear that speculation on the waxing-and-waning of empires in periodized chronologies was a far-reaching historiographical enterprise. As already established in the history of research, before Daniel beheld a four-tiered statue or watched in shock as four mythic beasts emerged from the sea, there are clear antecedents for this style of historiography in both Hellenistic and

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ancient Near Eastern sources.¹ In her excursus on the topic, Newsom underscored that in many ancient Jewish appropriations of the scheme the resulting historical reflection and expectation were both politicized and polemicized “into a model of resistance.”² As Portier-Young described, such expressions of resistance were concerned with interpreting “past and present, asserting the transience and finitude of temporal powers” while affirming “God’s governance of time and the outworking of God’s plan in history” and providing “hope for a transformed future.”³

The question of where and when this mechanism crossed the bridge into ancient Jewish thought, culture, and literature, however, is difficult to discern. Typically, the answer to this question is simple: Daniel. However, in view of a now fuller (albeit, fragmentary) collection of Aramaic writings from the mid-Second Temple period recovered from the caves of the Judean wilderness, it seems that the bridge was travelled by more than a single writing. This subsection of the Qumran discoveries included a suite of some thirty literary compositions penned in Aramaic. Incidentally, they share with Daniel a number of features that made the book an odd fit in the Hebrew Scriptures: these too are written in Aramaic, have a notable apocalyptic tone, and were also products of the mid-Second Temple period.

In what follows, I will (re)introduce aspects of the book of Daniel in the new setting of the Aramaic Dead Sea Scrolls as well as survey this collection for expressions of four kingdoms motifs or, in some cases, offer an alternative explanation to the historiographical approaches of select works. At the close of the paper, I will reflect on how setting the four kingdoms motif and Daniel in this broader context may shed light on how we understand the

1 Joseph Ward Swain, “The Theory of the Four Monarchies: Opposition History under the Roman Empire,” *CP* 35 (1940): 1–21; Michael J. Gruenthaner, “The Four Empires of Daniel I: The Scriptural Evidence,” *CBQ* 8.1 (1946): 72–82; Michael J. Gruenthaner, “The Four Empires of Daniel II: The Evaluation of the Scriptural Evidence,” *CBQ* 8.2 (1946): 201–12; David Flusser, “The Four Empires in the Fourth Sibyl and in the Book of Daniel,” *IOS* 2 (1972): 148–75; Gerhard F. Hasel, “The Four World Empires of Daniel 2 against Its Near Eastern Environment,” *JSOT* 4 (1979): 17–30; Walter Burkert, “Apokalyptik im frühen Griechentum: Impulse und Transformationen,” in *Apocalypticism in the Mediterranean World and the Near East*, ed. David Hellholm (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1983), 235–54; Lucas Ernest, “The Origin of Daniel’s Four Empires Scheme Re-Examined,” *TynBul* 40 (1989): 185–202; John J. Collins, *A Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 166–70; Carol A. Newsom with Brennan W. Breed, *Daniel: A Commentary*, OTL (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2014), 80–81.

2 Newsom, *Daniel*, 81.

3 Anthea Portier-Young, *Apocalypse Against Empire: Theologies of Resistance in Early Judaism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011), 27.

exchange and interactions of knowledge transmitted across cultures via Aramaic scribal tradition.

2 Four Kingdoms Chronologies in the Early Composition, Transmission, and Reception of the Book of Daniel

Research on Daniel has emphasized both the centrality and complexity of the book's chronologies.⁴ What I am most interested in here is how the book's eventual chronological complexity is a result of its redactional growth occasioned by, in many instances, the revision and extension of its political theology with reference to the four kingdoms motif.

Now decades old, Vermes's description of "rewritten bible" and Fishbane's discussion of "inner biblical exegesis" remain essential starting points for understanding the compositional growth, and even conversation between, traditions and tradents of the Hebrew Scriptures.

Perhaps fitting of their pioneering work, ongoing studies have revised, reworked, and reflected on their models for compositional growth adding both precision and nuance. Arguably, one of the more significant outcomes is the recognition that many of the strategies inherent to the growth of "biblical" literature are the very same approaches observed in scribal culture of ancient Judaism that continued to innovate, create, and compose literature on the basis of antecedent material. Most of the compositions included in such treatments, however, have a longer heritage in ancestral traditions and larger intervals of time between extension and formation of traditions.⁵

Our traditions that surface in Daniel, however, evidence historiographical revision very early on in their lifespan. An Aramaic/Hebrew hybrid form of the work came together by the mid-160s BCE. While more work needs to be done

4 For a recent study and past bibliography on the complex chronologies in Daniel, see Michael Segal, "Calculating the End: Inner-Danielic Chronological Developments," *VT* 68 (2018): 272–96.

5 Michael Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988); Géza Vermes, *Scripture and Tradition in Judaism: Haggadic Studies*, SPB 4 (Leiden: Brill, 1961; 2nd ed., 1973). For a recent reconsideration of the problems and prospects of Vermes's formulation, see József Zsengellér, ed., *Rewritten Bible after Fifty Years: Texts, Terms, or Techniques*, JSJS 166 (Leiden: Brill, 2014). In general, discussions of so-called "rewritten" or "parascriptural" texts have tended toward analyses of the generative process of largely Pentateuchal traditions in the mid-Second Temple period. For an application toward prophetic literature, see George Brooke, "Parabiblical Prophetic Narratives," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls After Fifty Years: A Comprehensive Assessment*, ed. James C. VanderKam and Peter W. Flint (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 1:271–301.

on the text and codicology of the Qumran Daniel manuscripts, it strikes me that the revising activity of the early Aramaic/Hebrew Daniel materials must have occurred in short order given the proximity of our earliest witnesses discovered at Qumran to the compositional date.⁶

Close study of the evolving traditions within this hybrid book reveals redactional stages occasioned primarily by changing political situations. Kratz offered the most sophisticated argumentation in this regard. Some of the most visible incremental revision involved scribal activity centered on the historiographical structures for the exchange of empires. For example, Kratz demonstrated that the extension of the kingdoms chronology in the earlier Aramaic chapters involved a secondary addition of the statue's iron-clay toes (Dan 2:41–43) as well as the multiplication of horns (Dan 7:20–24). This redactional activity not only contributed to the form of an existing Aramaic tradition, it was generative for the ongoing growth of the Daniel tradition in the Hebrew chapters. In this way, there is a space for merging discussions of *redaction* with observations on the process of *rewriting*, both considered at the level of composition.

Collins noted that, while Daniel is not technically pseudepigraphic, as the tradition develops, Daniel becomes a pseudonym. I argue elsewhere that one of the first places we see this is within the biblical book, particularly in the latter Hebrew chapters. From this perspective, Daniel 8–12 is a parascriptural tradition developed out of, and in interaction with, the earlier Aramaic chapters.⁷ Furthermore, part of what occasioned this fresh first-person take on the tradition was the reception of an Aramaic Daniel tradition that was

6 As Cross noted in one of our earliest introductions to the Qumran discoveries, the late-second century BCE palaeographical date of one of the Qumran Daniel texts, 4QDaniel^c, indicates that this remarkable fragmentary manuscript is “closer to the original edition of a biblical work than any biblical manuscript in existence” (Frank Moore Cross, *The Ancient Library of Qumran*, 3rd ed. [Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995], 43). Prior to the discovery of the scrolls, the compositional history of Daniel was known to include at least two main editions of the book: a shorter version represented primarily by the Hebrew/Aramaic witnesses of the Masoretic tradition and a longer version represented by two main Greek translations (the Old Greek and Theodotion) (see Arie van der Kooij, “Compositions and Editions in Early Judaism: The Case of Daniel,” in *The Text of the Hebrew Bible and Its Editions: Studies in Celebration of the Fifth Centennial of the Complutensian Polyglot*, ed. Andrés Piquer Otero and Pablo A. Torrijano Morales, THBSup 1 [Leiden: Brill, 2016], 428–48). As Ulrich (Eugene C. Ulrich, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Origins of the Bible*, SDSSRL [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999], 96–97) documented and described, the Qumran Daniel fragments generally cohere to the structure and scope of the shorter edition. However, they also contain previously unknown data indicating textual diversity even within this emerging edition.

7 On this, see Andrew B. Perrin, “Redrafting the Architecture of Daniel Traditions in the Hebrew Scriptures and Qumran,” *JTS* (forthcoming, 2021).

itself a product of a scribal culture that innovated traditions by updating their political outlook and structures in a rolling process of composition.

Where do we see this in the biblical book? Kratz observed that some of the redactional contributions to the Aramaic materials are linked to the development of later Hebrew materials, particularly Daniel 11. He wrote, “In chapter 11 the visions of the four kingdoms (chapters 2 and 7) and of the four Diadochi (chapter 8) are taken up and brought up-to-date. On the other hand, the additions in chapters 2, 7 and 8 anticipate these expansions in both matters of content and language.”⁸ While shifting the identification of the four kingdoms was not the nature of this updating—as is the case in later Second Temple period traditions such as those in 4 Ezra or Josephus—the scribe/redactor of Daniel 11 participated in a particularizing type historiography. There is, or course, a long list of exegetical and historical problems in the opening lines of Daniel 11, but the author of this material is clearly building on a four kingdoms schema. Yet he did not update the schema itself. Rather, he pursued a line of explanation and expectation focused now on happenings in recent or contemporary days under the fourth empire.

This brief account of the development of an early Daniel tradition in view of the four kingdoms motif allows for some preliminary remarks. First, the composition, transmission, and reception of the book are *all* related and part of a dynamic process. Second, the book’s political ideologies and historiographical structures were some of the main areas that enabled this sort of scribal redaction.⁹ Third, while this type of compositional activity is something we might recognize within “biblical” literature, Daniel is an ideal case to show this phenomenon is formative to materials built and based within the mid-Second Temple period. Fourth, in the context of the Aramaic Dead Sea Scrolls, this sort of compositional activity may fit within a larger framework, as the writers of several other materials were adept at extending antecedent, ancestral traditions into new compositions by various means.

While more could be said on each of these points, in the interests of expanding our view of this Aramaic tradition, I will now turn my attention to one

8 Reinhard G. Kratz, “The Visions of Daniel,” in *The Book of Daniel: Composition and Reception*, ed. John J. Collins and Peter W. Flint, VTSup 83, FIO TL 2 (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 1:91–113, here 104. For a fuller treatment of this topic, see also Reinhard G. Kratz, *Translatio imperii: Untersuchungen zu den aramäischen Danielerzählungen und ihrem theologiegeschichtlichen Umfeld*, WMANT 63 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1987).

9 The trend of updating *ex eventu* political outlooks is a wider phenomenon, as demonstrated most recently by Matthew Neujahr, *Predicting the Past in the Ancient Near East: Mantic Historiography in Ancient Mesopotamia, Judah, and the Mediterranean World*, BJS 354 (Providence: Brown University Press, 2012).

of the clearest contributors to four kingdoms chronologies, the aptly named text, 4QFour Kingdoms.

3 The Aramaic 4QFour Kingdoms

The work known as 4QFour Kingdoms is represented by three fragmentary manuscripts from Qumran Cave Four (4QFour Kingdoms^{a-c} [4Q552, 4Q553, 4Q553a]).¹⁰ The earliest of these seems to be 4Q553, which Puech dated palaeographically to ca. 100–50 BCE, though the compositional date of the work is certainly earlier than the material evidence.¹¹ How much earlier depends on many factors. One key factor is the scope of the kingdoms behind the dream-vision symbols. The text purports to disclose special knowledge on the course of history through a revelatory account of either a Jewish courtier or pagan king using the symbolism of four trees that dialogue with an unknown (or unnamed) dreamer.¹² Perhaps the most relevant excerpt of this composition for our topic, is found in 4Q552 1 ii, which has some minor overlaps with 4Q553 2 ii + 3 indicated in bold.¹³

נוגהא קאם וארבעה אילנין אמרין לה	1
וקאם אילנא ורחקו מנה ואמר]	2
צורתא ואמרת אן אהזא ואתב ונ] ב ה וחזית	3
אילנא די [קאם] ¹⁴ הזא שים במ]	4

¹⁰ To avoid confusion in this discussion, I will use the term “four kingdoms” to signify the historiographical mechanism and the title “4QFour Kingdoms” to refer to the Aramaic work represented by the three Cave Four manuscripts noted above.

¹¹ Émile Puech, *Qumrân Grotte 4.XXVII: Textes araméens, deuxième partie: 4Q550–4Q575a, 4Q580–4Q587*, DJD 37 (Oxford: Clarendon, 2009), 74.

¹² The court setting of the work is confirmed by the phrase **ואמר לי מלכא** (“and the king said to me”) in 4Q552 1 i + 2 8. While the interrogation and dialogue with the symbols within the episode is a unique feature of this dream-vision text, the seer also seems to have benefited from some encounter or explanation from an angelic being, as suggested by the phrase **לי מלאכא** (“to me the angel”) in 4Q553a 2 ii 2.

¹³ The transcription is based on Puech (*Qumrân Grotte 4.XXVII: Textes araméens, deuxième partie*, 64), though I have not retained his more extensive reconstructions. Translation mine.

¹⁴ There is an effaced section of the manuscript here that is unlikely a *vacat*. The restored verb in the above transcription is at Puech’s recommendation (*Qumrân Grotte 4.XXVII: Textes araméens, deuxième partie*, 66). The suggestion is not certain but makes sense in light of the context of the previous lines and fits the available space in the manuscript. Note also that the monarch may have referenced trees **קאמין** (“standing”) before him in 4Q552 1 i + 2 9.

ושאלתה מן שמך ואמר לי בבל] ואמרת לה	5
אֲנִתָּה הוּא דִּי שְׁלִיט בְּפֶרֶס וְ[הוּיִת אֵילָנָא אַחֲרֵינָא ¹⁵	6
cat]va[ג'ח'ית/ח'ז'ית ¹⁶ למערבא ל]	7
למשנך ושאלתה מן שְׁמִנְךָ ואמר לי מ	8
ואמרת לה אנתה הוא וְ[י	9
תקפי ימא ועל מחווא [ועל/כול עמיא	10
אילנא תלית'א]א וְ[אמרת ל]ה	11
חווך שְׁ]	12

- 1 the dawn arose, and four trees[saying to him ...]
 2 and the tree stood and they went far from him and it said[...]
 3 the image. And I said, “Where may I look and under[stan]d it?”
 [And I saw]
 4 the tree that [arose] was set in[...]
 5 And I asked it, “What is your name?” And he said to me, “Babylon.”
 [And I said to it,
 6 “You are him who rules in Persia.” And[I saw another tree]
 7 [I loo]ked to the west to[...]
 8 to torment. And I asked it, “What is [your] name?” [And it said
 to me ...]
 9 And I said to it, “You are him wh[o ...]”
 10 the vigor of the sea and over the harbor[and over the peoples]
 11 [the] third tree. [And] I asked i[t ...]
 12 your appearance [...]

While the fragment is damaged, the surviving text allows for both a few observations and open questions regarding the work's historiographical structure and potential relation to other early Aramaic expressions of the four kingdoms motif.

The reference to the symbols of “four trees” (4Q552 1 ii 1) confirms we are indeed in the framework of some four kingdoms chronology. I have argued elsewhere that the most likely configuration of the kingdoms based on internal

15 Puech (*Qumrân Grotte 4.XXVII: Textes araméens, deuxième partie*, 66) suggested that this adjective, which is extant in the overlapping text of 4Q553 3 + 2 ii + 4 5, may have been inserted supralinearly at the end of this line or perhaps included in the lacuna at the beginning of line 7. For a similar presentation, see Klaus Beyer, *Die aramäischen Texte vom Toten Meer samt den Inschriften aus Palästina, dem Testament Levis aus der Kairoer Genisa, der Fastenrolle und den alten talmudischen Zitaten: Ergänzungsband* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1994), 108.

16 My reading of this character cluster differs from that of Puech (*Qumrân Grotte 4.XXVII: Textes araméens, deuxième partie*, 64).

TABLE 1 Proposed referents for the historical scheme of 4QFour Kingdoms^a

	Kingdom #1	Kingdom #2	Kingdom #3	Kingdom #4
<i>Collins</i>	Babylon-Persia	Greece	(a) Ptolemaic Egypt (b) Seleucid Syria	(a) Seleucid Syria (b) Rome
<i>Cook</i>	Babylon-Persia	Greece	Rome	Kingdom of God
<i>Flint</i>	Babylon-Persia	Greece	(a) Syria (b) Rome	(a) Rome (b) Kingdom of God
<i>Hogeterp</i>	Babylon-Persia	Media	“Yawan” (i.e., Greece) representing either: (a) Kings of south and north (b) Kings of Assyria and Egypt	“Kittim” (i.e., Rome)
<i>Perrin</i>	Babylon-Persia	Greece	Rome	Kingdom of God
<i>Puech</i>	Babylon-Persia	Media	Greece	Kingdom of God
<i>Reynolds</i>	Babylon-Persia (and Media?)	Greece (or Macedonia)	Ptolemaic Egypt	Seleucid Syria

- a This table is adapted and updated from my earlier discussion, Perrin, *The Dynamics of Dream-Vision Revelation*, 214. Data in this table derive from the following: John J. Collins, “Apocalypticism and Literary Genre in the Dead Sea Scrolls,” in *The Dead Sea Scrolls after Fifty Years: A Comprehensive Assessment*, ed. Peter W. Flint and James C. VanderKam with the assistance of Andrea E. Alvarez, (Leiden: Brill, 1998–1999), 2:403–30; Peter W. Flint, “The Daniel Tradition at Qumran,” in *The Book of Daniel: Composition and Reception*, eds. John J. Collins and Peter W. Flint, VTSup 83, FIO TL 2 (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 2:329–67; Michael Wise, Martin Abegg Jr., and Edward Cook, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A New Translation* (New York: Harper One, 2005), 556; Puech, *Qumrân Grotte 4.XXVII: Textes araméens, deuxième partie*, 57–58; Albert L. A. Hogeterp, “Daniel and the Qumran Daniel Cycle: Observations on 4QFour Kingdoms^{a-b} (4Q552–553),” in *Authoritative Scriptures in Ancient Judaism*, ed. Mladen Popović, JSJS 141 (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 173–91; and Bennie H. Reynolds III, *Between Symbolism and Realism: The Use of Symbolic and Non-Symbolic Language in Ancient Jewish Apocalypses 333–63 B.C.E.*, JAJSup 8 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011), 191, 199–201. In cases where two options have been proposed for a given kingdom, I include these under the same column as “a” and “b.”

clues and external comparisons is: Babylon-Persia, Greece, Rome, and the eschatological rule of God.¹⁷ However, to put this in the context of the larger scholarly discussion, the following table indicates the variety of views on offer.

17 See Andrew B. Perrin, *The Dynamics of Dream-Vision Revelation in the Aramaic Dead Sea Scrolls*, JAJSup 19 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2015), 215–17. In summary, this determination is made on the following points. Tree #1: The first tree reveals its identity

What is common to all of these, and is clear in the text itself, is that the first tree/kingdom is a conglomerate. The tree names itself as Babylon (line 1), yet the dreamer later understands this as the ruler of Persia (line 9). Regardless of one's position on the identification of the later kingdoms in the more fragmentary parts of the texts, this consolidation of the empires in the first position seems to have been to free up a slot later on in the chronology. This is already an intriguing historiographical approach: it suggests an authorial commitment to the framework provided by the common four kingdoms mechanism as well as the ability to innovate within the parameters it provided. As is evident from the scholarly explanations of which four kingdoms are in view, all agree that the empires behind the symbols of the Aramaic 4QFour Kingdoms accounted for something beyond the framework familiar from the book of Daniel (i.e., Babylon, Media, Persia, Greece). This, of course, leads to our next interpretive issue.

The use of a four kingdoms scheme in an Aramaic dream-vision text from the mid-Second Temple period invites the question of its orientation to the book of Daniel. Unlike the fragments collected under the modern title of Pseudo-Daniel (4Q243–244; 4Q245) which name Daniel on several occasions,¹⁸ the available 4QFour Kingdoms fragments make no reference to Daniel. The identity of our seer is technically unknown. However, even if he was named

as “Babylon” (4Q552 1 ii 1). Judging by the dreamer's response in 4Q552 1 ii 6, this first kingdom is understood as a hybrid, representing the generic imperial foe in the east, “Babylon-Persia”. Tree #2: There are two items that suggest the second kingdom was “Greece”. In line 7 the dreamer seems to look to the “west” to view this empire. By lines 9–10, he notes this kingdom's seafaring dominance. Both of these points are commensurate with “Greece,” and not easily reconciled with an identification of a landlocked, eastern kingdom, such as “Media.” Tree #3: If the identification of “Greece” is correct, then the logical succession for the third tree is “Rome.” Such a progression is evident in other four kingdoms schemes (*Ant.* 10.276; *Sib. Or.* 4.101–102; *Tg. Ps.-J.* at *Gen* 15:12; and *Exod.* Rab. 35:5; compare also the five kingdom scheme of *Mek. de-Rabbi Ishmael Beshallah* 11.130–42). Additionally, there is no hint in the fragments of an interest or awareness of either Diadochian divisions or the struggle under Antiochus IV. Tree #4: Comparative studies on other ancient political propaganda suggest that the final kingdom in the sequence is postured as the capstone of history. Note, for example, the addition of Rome as the fifth kingdom in classical historiographies (*Tacitus [Historiae* v.8–9], *Dionysius of Halicarnassus [Ant. Rom.* 1.2.2–4], *Appian [Praef.* 9], and *Claudian [De consulatu Stilichonis* 111.159–66]). In light of this trend, this Qumran dream-vision text seems to have anticipated the arrival of the eternal rule of God, thought to be on the ever-near but never arriving horizon, now slated after Roman rule.

18 4Q243 1 1; 2 1; 5 1; 6 3; 4Q244 4 2; 4Q245 1 1 3. Note, however, that applying a “pseudo” title to these fragments is problematic. 4Q243–245 are simply Daniel traditions. On this, see Perrin, “Redrafting the Architecture of Daniel Traditions.”

“Daniel,” as some have suggested,¹⁹ this would confirm only that the text was part of the growing Danielic tradition in the mid-Second Temple period, not dependence on the “biblical” book. As both Stuckenbruck and Tigchelaar noted, in view of the fragmentary evidence available, the association of the Aramaic 4QFour Kingdoms with either the character or book of Daniel is speculative.²⁰

In lack of explicit links, perhaps implicit features may suggest some interaction between 4QFour Kingdoms and the book of Daniel. As Hogeterp demonstrated, there are many terminological and literary affinities between the traditions. In the end, he proposed that “it stands to reason to suppose that 4QFour Kingdoms provided a general elaboration on Danielic themes and Danielic tradition,” though was careful to caution that “the attribution of the composition to Daniel” is not certain.²¹ This conclusion, however, goes beyond the available evidence, particularly concerning the lexical data. Many (even most) of the features and items Hogeterp presented are not unique to this pair of texts.²² Most often, they stem from a larger, shared literary and linguistic foundation that appears to have been established in Aramaic scribal culture

19 Puech, *Qumrân Grotte 4.XXVII: Textes araméens, deuxième partie*, 57; Klaus Beyer, *Die aramäischen Texte vom Toten Meer samt den Inschriften aus Palästina, dem Testament Levis aus der Kairoer Genisa, der Fastenrolle und den alten talmudischen Zitaten: Band 2* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2004), 144.

20 Loren T. Stuckenbruck, “The Formation and the Re-Formation of Daniel in the Dead Sea Scrolls,” in *The Bible and the Dead Sea Scrolls, Volume 1: Scripture and the Scrolls*, ed. James H. Charlesworth (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2006), 1101–30; Eibert Tigchelaar, “Aramaic Texts from Qumran and the Authoritativeness of Hebrew Scriptures: Preliminary Observations,” in *Authoritative Scriptures in Ancient Judaism*, ed. Mladen Popović, JSJS 141 (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 155–71.

21 Hogeterp, “Daniel and the Qumran Daniel Cycle,” 189.

22 Of the many terminological features Hogeterp (“Daniel and the Qumran Daniel Cycle,” 179–83) tracked in 4QFour Kingdoms, Daniel, and the larger data set of the Qumran Aramaic texts, there are four lexical items for which he accounted similarities only between 4QFour Kingdoms and Daniel. Upon reevaluation, these too find a broader representation across the Aramaic Dead Sea Scrolls. The Aramaic term נגג (“dawn”) found in 4Q552 1 ii 1 and Dan 6:20 also occurs in 4Q580 1 ii 15. The noun אילינא (“tree”) used several times in 4QFour Kingdoms and Dan 4:7–8, 11, 17, 20 occurs at least fourteen times across multiple other works in the Qumran Aramaic texts (1Q20 13:10; 4Q201 1 ii 4, 5, 9; 4Q204 1 i 28; 1 v 7; 1 xii 26, 28; 4Q205 1 xii 2; 4Q206 1 xxvi 15; 4Q211 1 i 4, 5; 4Q531 2 + 3 5; 4Q558 78 2). The configuration כ שׁלִיט (“ruler over”) at 4Q552 1 ii 6, which Hogeterp suggests finds a “close parallel” to phrasing in Dan 4:22, 29; 5:21, 29, is in fact replicated in 4Q542 1 i 2–3 and 4Q550 7 + 7a 1. The claimed paralleled uses of the noun שׁלִיט (“dominion”) in 4Q553 1 i 4 and Dan 3:33; 4:19, 31; 6:27; 7:6, 12, 14, 26–27 occur at least fifteen times across the Aramaic Dead Sea Scrolls (4Q196 2 6; 4Q209 28 2; 4Q243 1 ii 3; 4Q246 1 ii 9; 4Q530 2 ii + 6–12(?) 16 [perhaps “ruler”]; 4Q544 2 13; 4Q546 5 1; 4Q550 1 6, 7; 4 6; 7 + 7a 4; 4Q558 50a–b 3; 4Q569 3a–b 2; 4Q570 20 3; 11Q10 9 4). In view of this reevaluation, there are no demonstrably unique terms between 4QFour Kingdoms and Daniel.

as evidenced by their broader representation in narratives of the Aramaic texts among the Dead Sea Scrolls.

So what is the value of the 4QFour Kingdoms text for a study on the origins, development, and reception of the four kingdoms motif? First, it is a reminder that ancient Jewish literature can be studied regardless of whether it is related to, in conversation with, or develops out of the few writings from this period eventually canonized in Judaism and Christianity. Second, it demonstrates the scribal innovation of a structure that was part of a broader cultural repertoire of historiographical mechanisms for articulating imperial histories in antiquity. Third, it reveals that there was more than a single articulation of the four kingdoms model available in the Qumran Aramaic corpus, by implication, in the Dead Sea Scrolls collection, and presumably, in broader Second Temple period thought. If the Aramaic 4QFour Kingdoms is not built on Daniel or, at a minimum, the relationship is indeterminate, then it indeed points beyond it.²³

23 Nadav Sharon has recently advocated an alternate interpretation of 4QFour Kingdoms, which he was gracious enough to share with me in prepublication form (Nadav Sharon, “Four Kingdoms’ in the Dead Sea Scrolls? A Reconsideration,” *DSD* 27 [2020]: forthcoming). Sharon argues that the text does not feature a sequential historiography of four kingdoms but a geographical distribution of nations who are understood as a single, overarching empire. Sharon argues there is nothing inherent to the Aramaic 4QFour Kingdoms to suggest a *chronological* succession of empires and that this has been inferred largely on account of Daniel’s four kingdoms patterns. He proposes that the *directional* map of Noah’s division of the land in Genesis Apocryphon provides a more helpful framework for guiding interpretation. This is a refreshing take on the text and rightfully takes into account perspectives now possible in light of the wider Qumran Aramaic collection. There are, however, some challenges to a strictly cartographical approach that, when addressed, may suggest a middle road between these interpretive options.

Any read of the Aramaic 4QFour Kingdoms—including my own—is limited by the fragmentary evidence. Yet it is evident that the scribe of this text took efforts to limit his timeline or map to four kingdoms (see above). Given this emphasis, it would be unusual if the scribe were not deploying or modifying the four kingdoms motif, which is a well-worn historiographical mechanism that transcends cultures and corpora in both classical and Near Eastern sources as well as fits within a larger framework of conceptions and calculations of time in the Aramaic Dead Sea Scrolls. Additionally, while the division of the land in Genesis Apocryphon is certainly cartographical, it too has a chronological outlook. That text not only lays out the map but has an *ex eventu* character insofar as it foresees the future interaction of the people groups emerging from Noah’s progeny (1Q20 14:17–19). In this respect, the expression of the four kingdoms motif in Daniel 7 might also be a beneficial conversation partner as the dream-vision there seems to express the crescendo of empires building on one another rather than their decisive breaks and transitions.

In these respects, I see the implications of Sharon’s interpretation less as overturning the consensus interpretation of 4QFour Kingdoms as an expression of the four kingdoms motif than as a reminder to take into account the geographical nature of the text, which

4 Other (Potential) Takes on the Four Kingdoms Motif in the Qumran Aramaic Texts

The fragmentary manuscripts of the book of Daniel and 4QFour Kingdoms are our clearest examples of the deployment and development of the four kingdoms mechanism in the Aramaic Dead Sea Scrolls. There are, however, at least three other writings that either contain hints of other potential applications or have been interpreted along such lines. These include fragments or passages in the Aramaic New Jerusalem, Tobit, and Pseudo-Daniel.²⁴

5 New Jerusalem

The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls included fragmentary materials of seven copies of the Aramaic New Jerusalem text: 1QNJ (1Q32), 2QNJ (2Q24), 4QNJ^a (4Q554) 4QNJ^b (4Q554a), 4QNJ^c (4Q555), 5QNJ (5Q15), and 11QNJ (11Q18). While the full shape and setting of the narrative is unknown, the extant materials include a visionary tour complete with a blueprint of the residential quarters, street plan, and design of the eschatological city. At least one key fragment also includes material hinting at some succession of empires perhaps in the context of an expected battle. As is evident from the text and translation below, 4Q554 13 is highly fragmentary, with references to both empires and people groups at the fringes of the fragment. The transcription and translation of this fragment is as follows:²⁵

is part of establishing the imperial timeline and footprints. It would be a false dichotomy to reduce our reading of 4QFour Kingdoms to a chronology vs. cartography approach. The two are not mutually exclusive. On the contrary, it is evident that the symbolism and outlook of 4QFour Kingdoms are concerned with both space and time. These are both functions of its likely apocalyptic character, form, and historiography.

24 The highly fragmentary text known as 4QpapVision^b also includes several scattered symbolic elements, tropes, nations, and individuals or ages from the Israelite past. These remnants suggest the text included some review or structure of history, likely in a revelatory context. Unfortunately, the text is terribly fragmentary allowing only glimpses of the larger, now lost, composition. For a preliminary analysis, see Perrin, *The Dynamics of Dream-Vision Revelation*, 76–77.

25 The Aramaic text above is based on Puech (*Qumrân Grotte 4.XXVII: Textes araméens, deuxième partie*, 136), though I do not include his more extensive proposed reconstructions or alignment with 4Q554 14, which is possible, but not certain. The translation is my own. For another presentation, see Lorenzo DiTommaso, *The Dead Sea New Jerusalem Text: Contents and Contexts*, TSAJ 110 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 66–67.

	יְתִוֶן לְקַן] 14
	באתרה ומלכות מ] 15
	כתיא באתרה כלהון בסוף כלהון] 16
	אחרין שגיאן ורשין עמהון מ] 17
	עמהון אדום ומואב ובני עמון] 18
	די בבל ארעא כלה די לא ישר] 19
	ויבאשון לזרעד עד עדן די י] 20
	בכל עממ] י [מלכות] הון] די ל] 21
	ויעב] דון [בהון עממין] 22
14	they will bring to ...[
15	in its place. And the kingdom of ...[
16	the Kittim in its place. All of them at the end of all of them[
17	others, numerous/great and powerful with them ...[
18	with them Edom, and Moab, and the Ammonites[
19	of Babylon, the land, all of it, which is not ...[
20	and they will be wicked toward your seed until the time of ...[
21	with all peoples [of their] kingdoms who ...[
22	and the nations will mak[e] in them

These scattered references to nations and peoples have been interpreted in various ways. The question for the interests of this essay, of course, is whether these hint at yet another take on the four kingdoms chronology. The fragment includes some phrasing suggesting the overturning of empires. The clearest instance of this is the phrase באתרה (“in its place/after it”) in 4Q554 13 15–16, which likely implies the overturning and supplanting of political powers.²⁶ These lines also reference כתיא (“the Kittim”) and include the partial construct form ומלכות (“and the kingdom of”), which suggests the historiographical structure extended into the period of Hellenistic or Roman rule. In addition to naming some classical foes of Israel’s past, line 19 references the more recent בבל (“Babylon”).

In view of these glimpses into the theological and political vision of 4Q554 13, both Puech and DiTommaso perceived the remnants of geopolitical historiographical structures. Puech ventured an extensive reconstruction including: Assyria, Babylon, Media, Persia, the Kittim, Egypt or Greece, Edom, Moab, and the Ammonites. DiTommaso argued the partial remains of a four kingdoms

26 Compare the use of בתר to signal the transition between weeks in the Enochic Apocalypse of Weeks (4Q212 1 iv 15 [1 En. 91:12]). Though not extant in the Qumran Aramaic fragments, see also 1 En. 93:4, 5–9; 91:12, 14–15, 17.

scheme, which he proposed originally included: Babylon, Persia, Media, and the Kittim. In different ways, these proposals also included the largely reconstructed reading “M[edia]” (ⲙⲉⲓⲁ) in line 15, which is possible, but survives only by the initial *mem*.

While both are correct in their shared acknowledgement of some historiographical mechanism in this fragment, unfortunately the extant terms and phrases confirm only that New Jerusalem’s view of the eschatological future involved an expectation of overturning kingdoms. It is possible that this involved some schema or roster of ancient Near Eastern and Mediterranean empires; however, the scope and structure of this chronology are largely lost. If the reading “Media” is retained at line 15, and DiTommaso’s proposal is entertained, the most intriguing aspect of this presentation is that the sequence of Babylon Persia at the outset is closer to the initial order of the 4QFour Kingdoms than to the book of Daniel. In this, we may not have uncovered a certain four kingdoms schema but perhaps discovered a shared sequence of two early empires in previously unknown Aramaic texts.

6 Tobit

The book of Tobit is known in at least four Aramaic copies (4QTobit^{a-d} [4Q196–199]) and the remains of a single Hebrew translation (4QTobit^e [4Q200]).²⁷ The manuscript history of the book of Tobit is complex and diverse. In the large scope and most details, the Qumran manuscripts include a form of the text that resembles the lost *Vorlage* of the so-called “longer” Greek version.²⁸ As such, when the Qumran Aramaic or Hebrew is not extant, this later Greek tradition can serve as a relative, though not certain, guide to the presumed Semitic language tradition of its *Vorlage*. This textual trajectory is relevant to the present example since the passage in question, Tob 14:3–4, is only partially

27 It is possible that 3Q14 4 also includes content from the book of Tobit, though this association has not been confirmed in view of the Cave Four materials (cf. 4Q196 14 ii 6–8; 4Q197 4 iii 2–5). See M. Baillet, J. T. Milik, and R. de Vaux, *Les ‘petites grottes’ de Qumran*, DJD 3, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1962), 103.

28 See Joseph A. Fitzmyer, “The Hebrew and Aramaic Fragments of Tobit from Qumran Cave 4,” *CBQ* (1995): 655–75. Even this characterization, however, is an oversimplification as the ancient medieval witnesses to Tobit resist simple categorizations. For a synopsis of all the available materials, see Stuart Weeks, Simon Gathercole, and Loren Stuckenbruck, *The Book of Tobit: Texts from the Principal Ancient and Medieval Traditions*, FoSub 3 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2004).

extant in 4Q198 1 and 4Q200 7 ii, requiring us to look primarily to the later Greek text.

On his deathbed, the aging Tobit delivers a farewell discourse that blends wisdom and eschatological motifs. The longer Greek version presents Tob 14:3–4b as follows:

Now when he was about to die, he called Tobias his son and commanded him, saying: “My child, take your children, and hurry off into Media, for I believe the word of God about Nineue, the things Naoum spoke, that all these things will come about and happen to Athour and Nineue. Also everything that the prophets of Israel spoke, those whom God sent, will happen. And not one of all their words will fail, but all will come true at their appointed times. *So in Media there will be safety rather than among the Assyrians or in Babylon* (καὶ ἐν τῇ Μηδίᾳ ἔσται σωτηρία μᾶλλον ἢ περ ἐν Ἀσσυρίοις καὶ ἐν Βαβυλῶνι). For I know and believe that all things that God said will be fulfilled and will come to pass, and no utterance of his word shall fail.”

Tob 14:3—4b NETS

Fitzmyer observed that this passage participates in a style of *ex eventu* prophecy. “Tobit is depicted as living at the peak of Neo-Assyria power in the 8th–7th century, but the author of the Tobit story, for whom the fall of Nineveh was a thing of the past, writes as an apocalyptic and casts history into the prophetic mold. This is why he makes Tobit speak of all things taking place at their appointed times.”²⁹ In this case, however, the prophetic voice focuses on the security of his progeny due to the imminent changing of the imperial guard that will impact their homeland and that of their neighbors to the south in the kingdom of Judea. This, of course, will involve an exchange of rule from Assyria to Babylon, but Media is not necessarily a component of a sequence in Tob 14:4. Rather, it is a place for temporary safe haven, which is the key element retained in the likely later, streamlined shorter version of the passage as found in Codex Vaticanus.³⁰

In this way, while the book of Tobit engages in *ex eventu* prophecy that relates to political events and imperial oversight it does not do so by use of an overt four kingdoms chronology.

29 Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *Tobit*, CEJL (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2003), 327.

30 Newsom (*Daniel*, 80) did, however, understand the references to Assyria, Media, and Persia as sequential and drew a parallel with Sib. Or. 4.49–101.

7 Pseudo-Daniel

The so-called Pseudo-Daniel materials from Qumran employed a diversity of historiographical strategies. In the work represented by 4Q243–244 we have the remains of what seems to be a broad historical review involving episodes, eras, and individuals from the ancestral past, through the exilic age, with a glance toward the eschatological future. The work represented by 4Q245—which is of uncertain relationship to the previous two manuscripts—deployed genealogies as the historiographical mechanism of choice. In the available fragments, these trace the historic lines of priests and kings from their inception into the Second Temple period before a concluding section speculating on the eschatological future.

The question is whether the four kingdoms motif is present in these previously unknown Daniel traditions. On the one hand, there is no indication of this in 4Q245. On the other, 4Q243 16 has been interpreted along such lines. Re-evaluation of the text and limited context of this fragment, however, indicates this is unlikely. Since there are several textual problems with this tiny fragment, I present it here with an independent transcription, translation, and selective notes for revised readings. Following this, I will critique past readings of the fragment for a four kingdoms motif and offer a new interpretation of its historiographical structure.

- [] 1
 [] 2
 [] 3
 [] 4

- 1 [...]... number of years[...]...[...]
 2 [with] a great [h]and and he will deliver th[em ...]
 3 [...]strong and [the] kingdoms of the people[s ...]
 4 [...]it is the ho[ly] kingdom[...]

Gauging the possibility of a four kingdoms scheme in this fragment comes down to interpreting fleeting content at the fringes of lines 1 and 4. The issue is what fragmentary word precedes the term “years” in line 1 and how (if at all) this relates to the reference to a “kingdom” in line 4. Before making this determination, however, readings in both lines require reevaluation.

The limited content of line 1 is at once fragmentary and suggestive. The initial word of the fragment is known by at least three partial characters. Collins and Flint adopt Milik’s transcription ܦܝܢ at the beginning of the line.

They tentatively render “oppressed(?)” based on the noun אִיצָא in subsequent Aramaic.³¹ However, the verb with this meaning is unknown in literature of the period.

The second word of the fragment is also extant only in part. Both old (PAM 43.247) and new (Plate 908, B-366933) images reveal the horizontal baseline strokes of two characters preceding a clear *yod*-final *nun* ending of the word in question. These strokes have been transcribed with uncertainty, for example, by Beyer (𐤍𐤌𐤌) and Collins and Flint (𐤍𐤌).³² Most other editions, however, venture variations on the reading שבעין (“seventy”).³³ The challenge here, however, is that the physical space is not enough to accommodate the *shin*, *bet*, *ayin* required for the reading. Aware of this, Collins and Flint posit that the *bet* “may have been supralinear.”³⁴ If the ink trace preceding the two final extant characters is an *ayin*, which is not certain (see below), the number ארבעין (“forty”) is at first glance possible.³⁵ Yet this reading has an even greater challenge of insufficient space. In translation, Cook provided both possibilities: “seve]nty (or [for]ty) years.”³⁶

My rendering included above is a new proposal for a word yet to be considered. Working through the options for eligible reconstructions of contemporary Aramaic words that both fit the physical and literary context, the word מִנְיָן (“number”) deserves consideration.³⁷ Admittedly, the biggest challenge with

31 J. T. Milik, “Prière de Nabonide et autres écrits d’un cycle de Daniel,” *RB* 63 (1956): 407–15; John J. Collins and Peter W. Flint, “Pseudo-Daniel,” in *Qumran Cave 4.XVII: Parabiblical Texts, Part 3*, ed. George Brooke, et al., DJD 22 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 108. See also Klaus Beyer, *Die aramäischen Texte vom Toten Meer: Band 2* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2004), 140. For the noun, see Marcus Jastrow, *Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2006), 59.

32 Beyer, *Die aramäischen Texte vom Toten Meer: Band 2*, 140; Collins and Flint, “Pseudo-Daniel,” 108.

33 Compare the following: 𐤍[ע]בִּי (Milik, “Prière de Nabonide,” 413), 𐤍[ע]ב (Joseph A. Fitzmyer and Daniel J. Harrington, *A Manual of Palestinian Aramaic Texts (Second Century B.C.–Second Century A.D.)* [Rome: Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 2002], 6), 𐤍[ע]ב (García Martínez, *Qumran and Apocalyptic: Studies on the Aramaic Texts from Qumran*, STDJ 9 [Leiden: Brill, 1992], 139), and 𐤍[ע]ב[ש] (Florentino García Martínez and Eibert Tigchelaar, *Dead Sea Scrolls: Study Edition*, [Leiden: Brill, 1997], 490). Collins and Flint (“Pseudo-Daniel,” 109) include the translation “[seven]ty(?)” in their rendering.

34 Collins and Flint, “Pseudo-Daniel,” 108.

35 Robert Eisenman and Michael Wise, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Uncovered* (New York: Penguin Books, 1993), 66.

36 Wise, Abegg, and Cook, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A New Translation*, 344.

37 For a list of potential words for reconstruction, see Ruth Sander and Kerstin Mayerhofer, *Retrograde Hebrew and Aramaic Dictionary*, JAJSup 1 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2010), 189–91.

this new proposal is the distance between the lower leg of the possible *nun* and extant *yod*. In this hand, *yods* routinely edge up to, or intersect with, the vertical strokes of the following character (e.g., 4Q243 8 3; 13 3; 16 1; 21 1). However, an analogous critique could be made of the reading of the penultimate character as an *ayin*, as these rarely if ever extend so south of the line the manuscript (e.g., 4Q243 16 3; 24 4). Likewise, if the character is a *bet*, as required by Collins and Flint's proposed reconstruction, we must contend with an oddly shaped and placed letter. For this letter too, the scribe uniformly extends the lower leg of the *bet* to intersect with the following character (e.g., 4Q243 6 2; 12 3, 4; 16 2). In this way, none of the current proposals for this fragmentary form are without palaeographical problems and/or require suggested hypothetical emendations.

The final word of line 4 is known only by the heads of a *qof* and possible *daleth*. Milik reconstructed the form קדן מיתהא ("first") here, which is adopted in most subsequent editions.³⁸ The reading "holy," accepted here, is made in light of Collins and Flint's reconstruction קדן ישתא, which is equally uncertain but introduces less interpretive difficulty to the fragment.³⁹ With the readings in lines 1 and 4 now problematized, we can now explore the scope and limits of the fragment's historiographical structure.

As indicated in the textual notes above, most past editions read and reconstruct "seventy" in line 1. At best, this reading is remotely possible but certainly speculative. Therefore, it cannot serve as a guide for interpretation. Nonetheless, the history of research built upon it. Beginning with Milik's preliminary edition in 1956, this fragment was presented under the title "Premier de quatre royaumes," indicating the text spoke of the emergence, rule, or duration of the initial kingdom in a four kingdom scheme. This is in part due to the heavily reconstructed reading of yet another fragmentary term in line 4.

Reconstructions of the final word of the fragment generally fall into two camps: the text refers to either the "first" kingdom or a "holy" kingdom. García Martínez suggested that "[t]he number [seventy] is taken, no doubt, from Jer 25:11–12 and 29:10," which forms the basis of the seventy weeks interpretation of Dan 9:2.⁴⁰ Building on Milik's suggestion, García Martínez understood the fragment as plugging into the origins of a four kingdoms chronology. He concluded, "[s]ince in Daniel this first kingdom lasted until the return from

38 Milik, "Prière de Nabonide," 413. See also Fitzmyer and Harrington, *A Manual of Palestinian Aramaic Texts*, 6; García Martínez, *Qumran and Apocalyptic*, 139; Beyer, *Die aramäischen Texte vom Toten Meer: Ergänzungsband*, 106; Beyer, *Die aramäischen Texte vom Toten Meer: Band 2*, 140; and Eisenman and Wise, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Uncovered*, 66.

39 Collins and Flint, "Pseudo-Daniel," 108.

40 García Martínez, *Qumran and Apocalyptic*, 143.

exile and our text depends on Daniel, the duration of this first kingdom must be the same as in the biblical book.⁴¹ On the more likely reading “holy,” Collins and Flint noted that the full phrase cannot be a “kingdom of holy ones,” as known from Daniel, since this would require a construct or particle ׀, which are not present.⁴²

Any interpretation of this fragment must contend with four issues. First, the reading “seventy” is far from clear and, therefore, is not a signpost for the duration of an empire’s rule or the exile. Second, even if the reading “seventy” is accepted and taken as a reference to the post-exilic period, it is difficult to account for the intermittent deliverance implied in lines 2–3 *before* the arrival of the alleged first kingdom of line 4.⁴³ Third, while the Pseudo-Daniel materials are thoroughly historiographical, as Collins and Flint noted, “nothing else in pseudo-Daniel suggests a four-kingdom pattern.”⁴⁴ Fourth, the assumption that Pseudo-Daniel presupposes or is a secondary development out of “biblical” Daniel is, yet again, unfounded.

In view of these challenges, I offer an alternative interpretation based on a new proposed tentative reading מְנִין שְׁנִין (“number of years”) in line 1. The Aramaic word מְנִין is known from Ezra 6:7.⁴⁵ The Hebrew Scriptures include five other variations on the phrase “number of years” (i.e., paired configurations of מספר and שנה). Of these, the occurrence at Job 36:26 is instructive, not least because the translator of 11Q10 28 4 rendered the Hebrew מספר שְׁנֵי as ומנין שְׁנוהי in Aramaic (both, “the number of his years”). Here in Job, the idiom describes the unsearchable and innumerable ages of God. A second occurrence is found in Dan 9:2, which reads מספר השנים. Variations on this phrase occur also in other ancient Jewish literature, generally in reflections or projections of long life and aging (Jub. 23.27; Wis 4:8). The Damascus Document features the analogous Hebrew phrase in a comment on the building tension of the present age and end of days. “When the number of years (למספר השנים) of this present age are complete, there will be no further need to be connected to the

41 García Martínez, *Qumran and Apocalyptic*, 144.

42 Collins and Flint, “Pseudo-Daniel,” 151.

43 Collins and Flint, “Pseudo-Daniel,” 150. As Collins observed, the figure is also found in 4Q390 1 2; 2 i 6 with reference to other periods (John J. Collins, “Pseudo-Daniel,” in *Outside the Bible: Ancient Jewish Writings Related to Scripture*, eds. Louis H. Feldman, James L. Kugel, and Lawrence H. Schiffman [Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 2013], 619).

44 Collins and Flint, “Pseudo-Daniel,” 150.

45 The Aramaic מְנִין also occurs a dozen times in Egyptian documentary texts, perhaps not surprisingly to specify amounts of currency or commodities. See Dirk Schwiderski, *Die alt- und reichsaramäischen Inschriften, Band 1: Konkordanz*, FSBP 4 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 532.

house of Judah, but instead each will stand on his own tower” (CD 4:10–12).⁴⁶ Finally, 1QH^a 9:26 references *תקופות מספר שני עולם* (“the numbered seasons of eternal years”) in a statement on how all ages and cycles are set and inscribed before God.

In light of the preceding uses of the phrase “number of years,” the proposed occurrence at 4Q243 16 1 would be a natural way of referring simply to a duration of time, perhaps even in the context of an eschatological outlook for an era of indescribable length. Such a forecast of longevity fits with the reference to a “holy kingdom” in line 4. From this perspective, then, the form in line 1 is not a cardinal number specifying an exact duration of time within a four kingdoms context. Rather, it is an idiom for a generic figure of longevity. It is neither related to *ex eventu* speculation of the duration of exile nor the arrival of an ancient near eastern kingdom. From this perspective, the fragment perhaps referred to the arrival and sustainability of divine rule in the eschatological age.

While this example involved dismantling a four kingdoms interpretation of 4Q243 16, the net result was a potentially new perspective on the broader apocalyptic historiography developed in an early Aramaic Daniel tradition.

8 Conclusion: An Aramaic Avenue for the Four Kingdoms Scheme in Ancient Judaism

This tour through a cross-section of Aramaic writings discovered in the Judaean Desert caves provided both new texts and fresh contexts in which to study the formation and application of four kingdoms chronologies in writings of the mid-Second Temple period. This mechanism was neither static for a fixed group of empires nor isolated to a single historiographical work. It was shown to be formative and generative to growing traditions (i.e., Daniel), had a broader currency in previously unknown texts (i.e., 4QFour Kingdoms), sat alongside other views of eschatological imperial succession or *ex eventu* prophecy of geopolitical movements (i.e. New Jerusalem and Tobit), and, at times, evaporated upon closer inspection (i.e., Pseudo-Daniel). In addition to these observations on the foregoing individual texts, I will conclude with some remarks on the situation and development of this mechanism in the context of the larger Qumran Aramaic corpus.

⁴⁶ Translation from Wise, Abegg, and Cook, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A New Translation*, 55, with slight revision to bring the idiom in question to the fore.

First, the texts above both draw upon and contribute to a broad array of conceptions for time, history, and expectation in the Aramaic Dead Sea Scrolls. By a blend of accident and intention, the four kingdoms motif has become one of the more visible and studied expressions of apocalyptic historiography in ancient Jewish Aramaic scribal culture. In many ways, this is an observation made in retrospect due to the canonization of Daniel. Like the writers of the book of Daniel, however, those behind the Aramaic texts also deployed many and manifold historiographical mechanisms to consider the past, account for the present, and clock the eschatological future (e.g., *Urzeit und Endzeit* typologies, periodizations with reference to “weeks” or “jubilees,” reflections on exile along an eschatological axis, and strategically structured genealogies). The recovery of these lost texts, then, revealed that our four kingdoms motif was appropriated broadly in the thought and literature of the mid-Second Temple period yet it also functioned in concert with other strategies used in the processes of apocalyptic historiography.⁴⁷

Second, this raises the question of whether or not the four kingdoms motif should be considered a “Danielic” theme in the context of the Dead Sea Scrolls. The answer is both yes and no. While there is a need for continued study of individual and clusters of Aramaic texts in this corpus, at present, it seems the only place this theme is demonstrably Danielic is in the formation of the Hebrew chapters of Daniel 8–12. As noted above, the composition of these chapters were occasioned by an updating and extension of the chronologies from the preceding Aramaic chapters. Of course, the redaction and reception of both sections of the hybrid work is far more complex than I have stated here. Nonetheless, the latter and later half of Daniel received the chronological framework of the earlier Aramaic sections and developed them within that stream of the Danielic tradition.

However, beyond the reformulation and particularization of the four kingdoms concept in Hebrew Daniel 8–12, we do not have certain evidence to suggest the scribes of the Aramaic texts understood our theme as strictly “Danielic.” At first glance, the so-called Pseudo-Daniel materials seemed to contribute a new Danielic take on the four kingdoms motif, but this was an over-reading of the fragments: we found Daniel but no four kingdoms chronology. The opposite was the case for the Aramaic 4QFour Kingdoms text: there we confirmed the chronology but cannot confirm the identity of the seer. If New Jerusalem is included in the mix, then we would have an important example of the

47 On the other varieties of time structures in the Aramaic texts, particularly the Enochic traditions, see the contribution by Loren Stuckenbruck in this volume.

development of a potential four kingdoms motif, or at least the understanding of waxing and waning empires in the apocalyptic historiography that was *not* formed on the basis of Danielic tradition. In that case, the work is developed in conversation with another line of tradition, Ezekiel 40–48. Perhaps more than anything, the lesson learned here is the need for nuance in our descriptors of texts and themes. Judaism, Christianity, and Western Culture may have received the four kingdoms theme predominantly through a Danielic tradition, but this should not be the only lens through which we study and explain texts from the pre-canonical era.

Third, the discovery of a larger literary heritage of ancient Jewish Aramaic writings from the mid-Second Temple period provides a new space to consider the formation of traditions as well as the exchange of ideas across cultures. Ongoing research on these materials has shown that Aramaic scribal culture was immersed in their own national and ancestral traditions as well as in dialogue with the intellectual and literary cultures of people groups to the east and west. This is true on a range of topics, from science and mathematics, to medicine and divination, to lore and genres. Three, four, and even five kingdoms motifs were developed in a variety of writings from classical and ancient Near Eastern sources. In view of the documented exchange and interaction with international cultural traditions in some of the Aramaic texts, I would add that the style of historiography that involves enumerating kingdoms in succession first entered ancient Jewish tradition across the bridge provided by the scribal culture of the Aramaic texts. To say these scribes simply “borrowed” or were “influenced” by their neighbors on this item or the foregoing list misses the point. Rather, they were part of this social and intellectual culture, not apart from it. The partial view of this Aramaic scribal culture granted by the Qumran fragments provides the opportunity to study how scribes created, cultivated, and contributed to emerging traditions in and beyond canonical literatures.

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The Four Kingdoms Motif and Sibylline Temporality in Sibylline Oracles 4

Olivia Stewart Lester

1 Introduction

The best-known example of the four kingdoms motif in the Jewish-Christian Sibylline Oracles can be found in Sib. Or. 4. The fourth sibyl prophesies a succession of kingdoms, also framed as ten generations, that will each end in destruction: Assyria (4.49–53), Media (4.54–64), Persia (4.65–87), Macedonia (4.88–101), and finally, Rome (4.102–151). This text has attracted scholarly attention primarily in debates about the source(s) for the four kingdoms motif, especially as that motif occurs in Daniel.¹ Secondly, scholars have turned to the four kingdoms motif in Sib. Or. 4 as providing data about the compositional layers of the book, arguing that an earlier four kingdoms oracle underlies the final five kingdoms Jewish oracle.²

Recently, the four kingdoms motif has been re-examined within a brilliant study by Paul Kosmin on periodized time in the Seleucid empire.³ Sibylline Oracles 4, however, did not appear in this analysis. This chapter will review the source and redactional conclusions of John Collins and David Flusser on the four kingdoms motif in Sib. Or. 4, and place them in conversation with Kosmin's proposal, which reads the motif primarily as an anti-Seleucid response to imperial periodized time. This chapter argues that although our historical knowledge of the four kingdoms motif in Sib. Or. 4 is reconstructed, scholarly speculation about the date and focus of the oracle call the universality of the motif as a third- and second-century BCE anti-Seleucid trope

1 See David Flusser, "The Four Empires in the Fourth Sibyl and in the Book of Daniel," *Ios* 2 (1972): 148–75; John J. Collins, "The Place of the Fourth Sibyl in the Development of the Jewish Sibyllina," *JJS* 25 (1974): 365–80; idem, *Daniel: A Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), 167–68; and Gerhard F. Hasel, "The Four World Empires of Daniel 2 against its Near Eastern Environment," *JOT* 12 (1979): 17–30, esp. 19–20. Joseph Ward Swain connected the Sibylline Oracles with the four kingdoms "philosophy of history" in 1940, but did not explicitly reference Sib. Or. 4 (Joseph Ward Swain, "The Theory of the Four Monarchies Opposition History under the Roman Empire," *CP* 35.1 [1940]: 1–21, esp. 15–16).

2 Flusser, "The Four Empires;" Collins, "The Place of the Fourth Sibyl."

3 See Paul J. Kosmin, *Time and Its Adversaries in the Seleucid Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018), and discussion below.

into question. It is just as likely that the four kingdoms motif in Sib. Or. 4 is anti-Macedonian. This does not undermine Kosmin's reading of the motif elsewhere in light of Seleucid historiography, but it does provide a significant example of the motif that may not have been engaging with Seleucid imperial power in its production.

This first level of engagement with Sib. Or. 4 in the chapter, then, is concerned with locating the four kingdoms motif in light of the proposed redactional layers of the book. It adopts a posture of looking backwards from the text, fragmenting it into sources and strata. While this is an act of imaginative reconstruction, it has value for attending to breaks in the text and aiming to locate the text as precisely as possible in its own historical moment. There are other postures, however, that we can and should adopt as we read texts like the Sibylline Oracles. Hindy Najman has issued a forceful call to biblical philologists to consider the formation and transformation of ancient Jewish texts as they move *forwards*—not just backwards—training their focus on what she has called a “traditionary process.”⁴ Kosmin also has specifically encouraged this shift in focus with respect to the four kingdoms motif, indicting earlier scholarship for becoming preoccupied with debates about the motif's origins.⁵

After looking backward, then, from the text of Sib. Or. 4 to its reconstructed four kingdoms oracle, this chapter will look forward, focusing on the traditionary process of the four kingdoms motif within the book. On the surface, time appears to be increasingly linearized in Sib. Or. 4, as the writer(s) add a fifth and final kingdom to the four kingdoms motif. A closer reading, however, finds that sibylline writerly activity produces timelines that are multiple and fragmented—the multi-layered periodization of time into ten generations and four kingdoms breaks off as a later redactor adds another kingdom and obscures the final generation. I argue that the fragmentation and multiplicity of the transformed four kingdoms motif in Sib. Or. 4 could destabilize ancient audiences.⁶ The predictability of the four kingdoms motif and the final

4 Hindy Najman, *Losing the Temple and Recovering the Future: An Analysis of 4 Ezra* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 46–48; idem, “Configuring the Text in Biblical Studies,” in *A Teacher for All Generations: Essays in Honor of James C. VanderKam*, ed. Eric F. Mason et al., JSJS 153/1 (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 1:3–22.

5 Kosmin, *Time and Its Adversaries*, 182.

6 In marking sibylline time as fragmentary, multiple, and less linear, I am influenced by an enormous body of research challenging notions of time as a singular linear whole. I have been particularly influenced by Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); Reinhart Koselleck, *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time*, trans. Keith Tribe (Cambridge, MA and London: MIT Press, 1985); Walter Benjamin, “Theses on the Philosophy of History,” trans. Harry Zohn, in *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World,

conflagration are undermined with a sense of unpredictability and chaos, disorienting the audience and escalating the threat of divine judgment.

2 The Jewish-Christian Sibylline Oracles

Before considering the four kingdoms motif in Sib. Or. 4, however, a few words of introduction about the Jewish-Christian Sibylline Oracles are needed.⁷ The Sibylline Oracles are a collection of Jewish and Christian prophecies that place teaching about God and the kind of life that God requires in the mouth of a type of “pagan” prophetess, a Sibyl. In antiquity, Sibyls were perhaps best known in relation to a collection of prophetic books owned by the Roman Senate and under the care of a group of men who consulted them under orders from the Senate.⁸ In art history, Sibyls are now perhaps best known for their presence on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. Each Sibyl in the Jewish-Christian Oracles

1968), 253–64. I have also been influenced by a growing number of scholars who have applied the field of temporal studies to the study of ancient Judaism. One such scholar is Hindy Najman, who takes Benjamin's notion of rupture as a way of reading varied Jewish reactions to the destruction of the second temple, in Najman, *Losing the Temple and Recovering the Future*, 1–25. A second is Paul Kosmin, who brings insights from temporal studies to an analysis of time in Seleucid-era texts and material culture (Kosmin, *Time and Its Adversaries*). Kosmin will receive more attention below. Third and finally, my thinking in this essay is deeply indebted to the papers and conversations at the Enoch Colloquium, “The Sense(s) of History: Ancient Apocalypses and Their Temporalities,” organized by Giovanni Bazzana and Paul Kosmin, Harvard Divinity School, November 16–17, 2017.

7 See, e.g., Johannes Geffcken, *Komposition und Entstehungszeit der Oracula Sibyllina* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1902); John J. Collins, *The Sibylline Oracles of Egyptian Judaism*, SBLDS 13 (Missoula: Society of Biblical Literature, 1974); idem, “Sibylline Oracles,” in *OTP*, ed. James H. Charlesworth (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1983), 1:317–472; idem, “Sibylline Discourse,” in *Apocalypse, Prophecy, and Pseudepigraphy: On Jewish Apocalyptic Literature* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015), 251–70; David S. Potter, *Prophecy and History in the Crisis of the Roman Empire: A Historical Commentary on the Thirteenth Sibylline Oracle* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990); Erich Gruen, “Jews, Greeks, and Romans in the Third Sibylline Oracle,” in *Jews in a Graeco-Roman World*, ed. Martin Goodman (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 15–36; idem, *Heritage and Hellenism: The Reinvention of Jewish Tradition* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 268–91; Rieuwerd Buitenwerf, *Book III of the Sibylline Oracles and Its Social Setting: With an Introduction, Translation, and Commentary*, SVTP 17 (Leiden: Brill, 2003); J. L. Lightfoot, *The Sibylline Oracles: With Introduction, Translation, and Commentary on the First and Second Books* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); Olivia Stewart Lester, *Prophetic Rivalry, Gender, and Economics: A Study in Revelation and Sibylline Oracles 4–5*, WUNT 11 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2018); Ashley L. Bacchi, *Uncovering Jewish Creativity in Book III of the Sibylline Oracles: Gender, Intertextuality, and Politics*, JSJSup 194 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2020).

8 Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Roman Antiquities* 4.62.4–6; Cicero, *On Divination* 2.54.112.

is a pseudepigraphic creation of the writers. John Collins has written that even if there was an historical Sibyl, “she was already lost in the mists of legend by the fifth century.”⁹ Written in hexameter verse, the Jewish-Christian Sibylline Oracles combine a traditional trope of sibylline prophecies as proclamations of doom with an initially Jewish, then Christian, innovation of sibylline ethical and theological instruction.¹⁰

The Jewish-Christian Sibylline Oracles survive in two manuscript traditions. The first manuscript tradition contains books numbered 1–8, but subdivides into versions that contain a prologue and versions that do not. The second contains two books numbered 9 and 10 that reduplicate material in the first tradition, followed by books 11–14. Modern editions thus contain 1–8, and then 11–14. The earliest manuscripts date to the fifteenth century.¹¹ Scholarly suggestions about the dates of sibylline composition do not stem, therefore, from the material evidence. Rather, scholars date the texts in light of the contents of the oracles themselves and the citations of ancient readers, including Clement of Alexandria and Lactantius.¹²

Scholarly consensus on the Jewish-Christian Sibylline Oracles holds that they are composite with respect to time and place of composition. In addition, some books were produced by Jewish writers and editors, and others by Christian writers and editors. As a whole, the Jewish-Christian Sibylline Oracles date from approximately the second century BCE to the seventh century CE.¹³ Book 3 was probably composed earliest; the majority of it was produced by Hellenistic Jewish writers and editors in Egypt in the second century BCE.¹⁴ Book 14 was probably composed latest, most likely in the seventh century CE by an Alexandrian Jewish writer. According to Collins, “[t]here is nothing to suggest Christian authorship.”¹⁵ The remainder of the books were probably

9 Collins, “Sibylline Oracles,” 317.

10 John J. Collins, “The Jewish Transformation of Sibylline Oracles,” in *Seers, Sibyls, and Sages in Hellenistic Roman Judaism*, JSJS 54 (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 181–97, esp. 189; idem, “Sibylline Discourse,” 251–70, esp. 252–53; H. W. Parke, *Sibyls and Sibylline Prophecy in Classical Antiquity* (London: Routledge, 1988), 7, 10–11, 12–13; Lightfoot, *The Sibylline Oracles*, 8 n. 31, 16–17, 136.

11 Collins, “Sibylline Oracles,” 321; Lightfoot, *The Sibylline Oracles*, 257.

12 Collins, “Sibylline Oracles,” 322. For discussions of early Christian reception of the Sibylline Oracles, see Madalina Toca, “The Greek Patristic Reception of the Sibylline Oracles,” in *Authoritative Texts and Reception History: Aspects and Approaches*, ed. Dan Batovici and Kristin De Troyer, BibInt 151 (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 260–77; Bard Thompson, “Patristic Use of the Sibylline Oracles,” *RR* 16.3–4 (1952): 115–36.

13 Collins, “Sibylline Oracles,” 317–472.

14 Collins, “Sibylline Oracles,” 354–55; idem, *The Sibylline Oracles of Egyptian Judaism*, 21–33.

15 Collins, “Sibylline Oracles,” 459.

composed at different times during the first three centuries CE, and Collins suggests that books 3, 5, and 11–14 were probably written in Egypt.¹⁶ In addition to books 3 and 14, books 4, 5, 11, and 12 have been characterized as Jewish, although Christian interpolations occur in Sib. Or. 3, 5, and 12.¹⁷ Several of the other books in the collection appear to have earlier Jewish layers transformed by later Christian writers, namely, Sib. Or. 1–2 and 8.¹⁸

Complex scholarly proposals for dating individual books within the collection—and for reconstructing redactional layers within individual books—strengthen the probability that numerous literary agents contributed to the writing, redaction, and assembly of Jewish-Christian Sibylline Oracles.¹⁹ One cannot take for granted that the literary agent(s) behind one book of the collection knew about other books. The influence of one Jewish-Christian Sibylline text on another has to be proven. Collins has argued compellingly that Sib. Or. 3 and 5 “form a coherent tradition”²⁰ within Egyptian Judaism. Manuscript evidence suggests continuity between books 1 and 2,²¹ and interpretive activity suggests some knowledge of book 3 by book 8.²² Each relationship has to be investigated on a case-by-case basis.

This chapter will focus on the reconstructed redaction of the four kingdoms motif found in one book within the sibylline collection, Sib. Or. 4. Book 4 seems to have at least two layers, as I will discuss in detail below. There is more scholarly agreement about the date of the final layer, at the end of the first century—approximately 80 CE—as Sib. Or. 4 demonstrates awareness of the eruption of Vesuvius, and that is the last datable event detectable in the book.²³

16 Collins, “Sibylline Oracles,” 317–472, esp. 322.

17 Cf. Sib. Or. 3.776 (Collins, “Sibylline Oracles,” 354); Sib. Or. 5.257, and perhaps also 5.51 (Collins, “Sibylline Oracles,” 390; Arnaldo Momigliano, “From the Pagan to the Christian Sibyl: Prophecy as History of Religion,” in *The Uses of Greek and Latin: Historical Essays*, ed. A. C. Dionisotti, Anthony Grafton, and Jill Krayer [London: Warburg Institute, University of London, 1988], 3–18, esp. 8); Sib. Or. 12.30–34, 152 (Collins, “Sibylline Oracles,” 443).

18 Collins, “Sibylline Oracles,” 330–31, 415–16.

19 I have argued elsewhere that the number of agents likely involved in producing these texts—as well as ancient understandings of prophetic writing that posited the collaboration of deities, prophets, and scribes—make the language of a single “author” inappropriate for describing the literary activity of producing Sibylline Oracles, from both ancient and modern perspectives (Stewart Lester, *Prophetic Rivalry*, 145–51).

20 Collins, *The Sibylline Oracles of Egyptian Judaism*, xiii.

21 Collins, “Sibylline Oracles,” 330; Lightfoot, *The Sibylline Oracles*, 258–59.

22 Collins, “Sibylline Oracles,” 415–17.

23 Flusser, “The Four Empires in the Fourth Sibyl and in the Book of Daniel”; Collins, “The Place of the Fourth Sibyl,” 365–80; Emil Schürer, “The Sibylline Oracles,” in *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 BC–AD 135)*, rev. and ed. Géza Vermes, Fergus Millar, and Martin Goodman (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1986), 3.1:618–53, esp. 641.

Sib. Or. 4 is one of the Jewish books of the Jewish-Christian Sibylline collection, with no Christian interpolations.²⁴ I have argued elsewhere that Sib. Or. 4 demonstrates the ongoing Jewish pseudepigraphic use of the figure of a sibyl for political critique of Rome and prophetic rivalry with traditions about Apollo's prophecy at Delphi.²⁵

Given the complexities of sibylline production, the argument of this essay that sibylline temporality in book 4 is fragmentary and multiple is not a claim about redactional or writerly intent. This chapter does comment on redactional and compositional activity with respect to the four kingdoms motif, but I am not arguing that the resulting temporality was the conscious design of sibylline writer(s) and editor(s). This chapter is, rather, a description of possible literary effects on audiences of the Jewish-Christian Sibylline Oracles, ancient and modern. It considers interpretive possibilities for the seams that scholars have used to work backwards to proposed sources, and the kinds of sibylline temporality such seams could create.

3 The Four Kingdoms in Sibylline Oracles 4

The fourth Sibyl initiates her prophecy with a triumphant call to the “people of boastful Asia and Europe”²⁶ to hear her. She boldly claims,

I am not an oracle-utterer of false Phoebus,²⁷ whom vain
men called a god, and falsely called a prophet,
but of the great God, whom no hands of men made
like speechless idols of polished stone.²⁸

24 Collins, “Sibylline Oracles,” 381: “There is no trace of Christian redaction in Sibylline Oracles 4.”

25 Stewart Lester, *Prophetic Rivalry*, 161–66.

26 λέως Ἀσίας μεγαλαυχέος Εὐρώπης τε (Sib. Or. 4.1). All Greek texts are from J. Geffcken, *Die Oracula Sibyllina* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1902). Translations of the Sibylline Oracles are my own, in consultation with Collins, “Sibylline Oracles,” 317–472.

27 This disavowal of Apollo functions simultaneously to differentiate the Sibyl of book 4 from other sibyls associated with Apollo (cf. Cumaean Sibyl, Virgil, *Aeneid* 6.77–82) and to undermine traditions about Apollo's prophecy at Delphi (Stewart Lester, *Prophetic Rivalry*, 164–67).

28 οὐ ψευδοῦς Φοίβου χρησμηγόρος, ὄντε μάταιοι
ἄνθρωποι θεὸν εἶπον, ἐπεψεύσαντο δὲ μάντιν·
ἀλλὰ θεοῦ μέγαλοιο, τὸν οὐ χέρες ἔπλασαν ἀνδρῶν
εἰδώλοισι ἀλάλοισι λιθοξέστοισιν ὅμοιον (Sib. Or. 4.4–7).

The book then details how people should and should not interact with the Sibyl's God. The great God, according to the Sibyl, is not worshipped in a temple of stone, like idols (4.6–17); rather pious people reject temples, look to God's glory, and avoid a list of vices, including murder, dishonest gain, and adultery (4.24–39). This leads to an assertion of God's judgment of the world and of mortals, including the impious and the pious together (4.40–48). Twice in Sib. Or. 4.6–48 she invokes a ten generation framing for the prophecies to come. After differentiating her God from idols who are worshipped in temples, the Sibyl explains,

This one drove a whip through my heart within,
So that I would recount accurately to men as many things as are now,
and as many things as will be hereafter,
from the first generation until the tenth comes.²⁹

The Sibyl proceeds to describe how the righteous live, pronouncing the certainty of God's judgment and rewards (4.24–46). Then, closing her introductory comments, she reiterates the ten generation framework:

But all things will be accomplished in the tenth generation;
And now, as many things as will happen from the first generation, these
I will tell.³⁰

In both instances, the Sibyl associates the tenth generation with the completion of her prophecy, claiming that the things she predicts will happen for ten generations to come.

Immediately after the passage quoted above, the fourth Sibyl launches into oracles against various nations, predicting their rise and fall in succession. It is in this litany of nations that the list of ten generations is partially realized. The kingdoms are not numbered, except for the first,³¹ Assyria, whose rule begins

29 οὗτός μοι μάστιγα διὰ φρενὸς ἤλασεν εἶσω,
ἀνθρώποις ὅσα νῦν τε καὶ ὀπίσσω ἔσσεται αὐτίς
ἐκ πρώτης γενεῆς ἄχρις ἐς δεκάτην ἀφικέσθαι
ἀτρεκέως καταλέξει· (Sib. Or. 4.18–21). For discussions of divine violence against the Sibyl during inspiration, see Jill E. Marshall, *Women Praying and Prophecy in Corinth: Gender and Inspired Speech in First Corinthians*, WUNT II (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017), 146–55; Stewart Lester, *Prophetic Rivalry*, 168–80.

30 ἀλλὰ τὰ μὲν δεκάτη γενεῇ μάλα πάντα τελεῖται·
νῦν δ' ὅσ' ἀπὸ πρώτης γενεῆς ἔσται, τὰδε λέξω (Sib. Or. 4.47–48).

31 Described adverbially (πρῶτα, Sib. Or. 4.49).

after the flood.³² Unlike the generations, there is no indication in advance that the audience should expect a list of four kingdoms. Nevertheless, Sib. Or. 4 follows the elevation and destruction of four kingdoms: Assyria (4.49–53), Media (4.54–64), Persia (4.65–87), and Macedonia (4.88–101). The Sibyl then connects the decline of Macedonia with Rome's ascent to power, without any immediate discussion of Roman downfall:

Nor will the strength of Macedonia exist; but from the west
A great Italian war will flourish, under whom the world
will be enslaved, bearing a servile yoke for the Italians.³³

All told, the Sibyl prophesies about the rise of five kingdoms in succession: the Assyrians, Medes, Persians, Macedonians, and Romans.

Unlike the previous four kingdoms, Rome's destruction does not follow the explicit cyclical rise and fall of its predecessors. The fourth Sibyl first describes the havoc wreaked by the Romans, including the destruction of the Jerusalem temple (4.115–29). Rome's destruction eventually occurs after a chaotic series of predictions that begin with the eruption of Vesuvius (4.130–34). The volcanic eruption then leads to military conflicts, during which Rome will make retribution for her plundering of Asia (4.147–48). The power of Rome implicitly ends with a final conflagration that will destroy the whole world, although Rome is not singled out in this devastation.³⁴ The book ends with a post-conflagration resurrection of the dead; this is one of Sib. Or. 4's most famous characteristics, along with its anti-temple polemic and its exhortation to baptism.³⁵

The ten generations promised in 4.20 and 4.47 appear in a complex relationship with the different kingdoms indicted by the Sibyl. Throughout 4.49–101, the Sibyl parcels out nine of the generations among the first three kingdoms: Assyria, six generations (4.50); Media, two generations, (4.55); Persia, one generation (4.66). In 4.86, she declares that the destruction of the Persians will happen in the tenth generation.³⁶ She never assigns the tenth generation

32 Sib. Or. 4.51–53.

33 οὐδὲ Μακηδονίης ἔσται κράτος· ἀλλ' ἀπὸ δυσμῶν
Ἰταλὸς ἀνθήσει πόλεμος μέγας, ᾧ ὅπο κόσμος
λατρεύσει δούλειον ἔχων ζυγὸν Ἰταλίδησιν (Sib. Or. 4.102–104).

34 The final conflagration is promised in 4.159–61, then described in 4.171–78.

35 See discussion in Collins, "Sibylline Oracles," 381–83.

36 "But when the race of mortals comes to the tenth generation,
Then will there be servile yokes and fear for the Persians."
ἀλλ' ἔταν ἐς δεκάτην γενεὴν μερόπων γένος ἔλθῃ,
καὶ τότε Πέρσησιν ζυγὰ δούλια καὶ φόβος ἔσται (Sib. Or. 4.86–87).

to any kingdom, however.³⁷ Once the Sibyl begins prophesying against the Macedonians and the Romans, there is no further mention of numbered generations.

On the basis of this combination of nine generations and five kingdoms, David Flusser and John Collins have both argued that Sib. Or. 4 was likely composed in a multi-stage process, with an original oracle that contained four kingdoms and assigned the tenth generation to the Macedonians.³⁸ They differ, however, in their proposed models of composition. Flusser and Collins also argue that Persian source(s) underlie the four kingdoms model in Sib. Or. 4.

Flusser argues that there were three stages of composition: (1) a four kingdoms oracle, ending with the Macedonians; (2) a redacted oracle, which added the Romans after the Macedonians and removed the tenth generation; (3) the final form of the book, produced by a Jewish writer before 80 CE, which made judgment against Rome more explicit.³⁹ Flusser suggests that there was a first layer of redaction because the language at the beginning of the Roman section so closely resembles the previous oracles (4.102–104). He notes that although a five empire scheme (ending with Rome) is widely attested in ancient literature, the first redactor did not know it; instead, “he followed the old scheme of four empires with the Macedonians as the fourth empire, and only stated that the Romans will follow them, without actually putting them in his scheme.”⁴⁰ Flusser offers little speculation about the production of the first two layers, except to suggest that if the mention of the flood in 4.51–53 is part of the earliest stratum, the source may already have been Jewish, produced around 140 BCE.⁴¹

Positing a strong contrast between attestations of the pre-Roman four-empire scheme and the Roman-era scheme of five empires, Flusser contends that both the ten generation framing and the four kingdoms motif are derived from Zoroastrian historiographical concepts. He finds meaningful resemblances between Sib. Or. 4 and Daniel and two Persian texts: *Zand-ī Vohūman Yasn* and *Dēnkard*, both later interpretations of a lost Avestan text. These Avestan interpretations periodize time into four ages associated with different metals, and the *Zand-ī Vohūman Yasn* connects the fourth kingdom with a

37 Flusser, “The Four Empires,” 150.

38 Flusser, “The Four Empires;” Collins, “The Place of the Fourth Sibyl.” For the more general suggestion that a pagan oracle underlies Sib. Or. 4, see also Geffcken, *Komposition und Entstehungszeit*, 18–19.

39 Flusser, “The Four Empires,” 150–52.

40 Flusser, “The Four Empires,” 151.

41 Flusser, “The Four Empires,” 152.

tenth century.⁴² Flusser takes these Persian historiographical concepts, rather than the specific texts, as the source for the four-empire motif in Sib. Or. 4 and Daniel.⁴³

Collins follows Flusser, and a more general suggestion of Geffcken,⁴⁴ in arguing for an earlier, Hellenistic oracle that predates Sib. Or. 4. He agrees that this oracle would have placed the tenth generation among the Macedonians.⁴⁵ He adds to this argument a suggestion that the description of the final conflagration and resurrection of the dead in 4.175–92 also belonged to the earliest layer, as they fit with Zoroastrian expectations.⁴⁶ In contrast to Flusser's suggestion that the earliest layer was Jewish, and his proposal of two redactional stages, Collins argues that the earliest layer was probably non-Jewish, and that there was only one layer of redactional activity in the book, at approximately 80 CE.⁴⁷ In Collins's reconstruction, the Hellenistic oracle could date from Alexander's lifetime to the mid-first century BCE, with more probability resting on an earlier date in that range, shortly after Alexander, because only one generation is assigned to the Macedonians.⁴⁸ Collins makes the compelling case that a legendary great flood is attested in many places outside of Jewish sources in ancient literature; therefore, beginning the kingdom of Assyria after the flood in 4.51 does not necessitate Jewish composition for the Hellenistic oracle. In addition, he avers that Jewish composition during the Macedonian empire would likely bear traces of Jewish resistance to the Greeks, and that such resistance is unlikely to have been omitted by a second Jewish redactor.⁴⁹ Collins does not specifically interrogate Flusser's proposal of a two-stage redactional model, but his proposal is the more probable, as a first-century Jewish redactor could certainly write in a continuous style with the earlier oracle, and indeed does in the subsequent sections (4.103–72). Positing a first redactor on the basis of linguistic resemblances in 4.102–104 with the earlier oracle is unnecessary for imagining the composition of this text.

Collins also concurs with Flusser about the likelihood that Persian historiographical concepts influenced the fourth Sibyl's periodization of history. He

42 Flusser, "The Four Empires," 165–74. For the tenth century, *Zand-ī Vohūman Yasn* 11, 1; Flusser, "The Four Empires," 170. Transliterations of this text's title vary: Flusser and Collins name it as *Zand-ī Vohūman Yasn*; Paul Kosmin names it as *Zand ī Wahman Yasn*, as in the discussion below.

43 Flusser, "The Four Empires," 172.

44 See n. 38.

45 Collins, "The Place of the Fourth Sibyl," 370.

46 Collins, "The Place of the Fourth Sibyl," 374.

47 Collins, "The Place of the Fourth Sibyl," 375–77; idem, "Sibylline Oracles," 381.

48 Collins, *Daniel*, 167; idem, "Sibylline Oracles," 381.

49 Collins, "The Place of the Fourth Sibyl," 375–76.

affirms Flusser's reading of resemblances with *Zand-ī Vohūman Yasn*, and also contends for similarities with the Oracle of Hystaspes and with the examples of a five-empire schema in Roman historians that Flusser separates out from the four kingdoms motif.⁵⁰ In Collins's reading, "schematization of history began as a feature of political oracles, especially in Persia."⁵¹

The proposal that Persian or Iranian sources are behind the four kingdoms motif in Daniel has been a topic of much scholarly discussion,⁵² but Sib. Or. 4 has been almost entirely left out of these conversations. A notable exception is Gerhard F. Hasel, who argued against linear proposals for the development of the four kingdoms motif, either from Greek or from Persian sources.⁵³ Hasel's article included specific discussion of Sib. Or. 4.⁵⁴ Expanding his sphere of inquiry beyond the four kingdoms pattern of Assyrians, Medes, Persians, and Macedonians, and including texts such as the Babylonian "Dynastic Prophecy," Hasel suggested the existence of "a common Near Eastern prototypical schema of successive kingdoms, dynasties, or empires."⁵⁵ Hasel rightly argues that tracking cross-cultural periodizations of history that employ a pattern of one kingdom following on another more broadly tells us something culturally significant about history in the ancient Near East. His proposal obscures the more specific similarities, however, between Sib. Or. 4 and the Iranian sources, including the intersection of a tenth generation and a fourth kingdom, noted by Flusser, and the joint beliefs in a final conflagration and a resurrection, noted by Collins. This is by no means to undermine the deeply Hellenistic character of Sib. Or. 4, but rather to reaffirm Iranian, as well as Hellenistic, influence.

Recently, Paul Kosmin has returned to the question of the four kingdoms motif within a rich study of presentations of time during the Seleucid era. Kosmin analyzes a vast range of textual and material sources, making a

50 E.g., Tacitus, *Histories* 5.8–9; Dionysius of Halicarnassus 1.2.1–4; Appianus, *Roman History*; and Velleius Paterculus. Contrast Flusser, "The Place of the Fourth Sibyl," 159–62, with Collins, "The Place of the Fourth Sibyl," 372 n. 40. Collins and Flusser adduce the same texts in these two places, but for different ends.

51 Collins, "The Place of the Fourth Sibyl," 372.

52 See, e.g., Paul Niskanen, who re-invigorated an insight from Arnaldo Momigliano and suggested that Daniel 2 draws its succession of kingdoms from Herodotus (along with Daniel's theology of history), rather than from Persian sources. Paul Niskanen, *The Human and the Divine in History: Herodotus and the Book of Daniel*, LHBOTS 396 (London: T&T Clark, 2004); Arnaldo Momigliano, "Biblical Studies and Classical Studies: Simple Reflections upon the Historical Method," in *Essays on Ancient and Modern Judaism*, ed. S. Berti, trans. M. Masella-Gayley (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 3–9.

53 Hasel, "The Four World Empires," 23.

54 Hasel, "The Four World Empires," 19–20.

55 Hasel, "The Four World Empires," 23–24.

compelling proposal about notions of time in Seleucid-era texts. Like much of the scholarship on the four kingdoms motif, however, Kosmin does not discuss the Sibylline Oracles. Kosmin's argument is that the Seleucid Empire introduced a new and enduring way of periodizing and characterizing time: numbering years in continuous succession, rather than counting the years of individual rulers one after the other.⁵⁶ Kosmin then reads various expressions of time and historiography produced in the third and second centuries BCE as responses to Seleucid projections of imperial power through time.

More specifically, Kosmin traces two "total history" responses to Seleucid time that emerge within Hellenistic Judaism: (1) histories found in the Pentateuch, (later canonical) Prophets, and Hellenistic Jewish historical reviews (e.g., Ben Sira, 1–2 Maccabees, Judith), and (2) apocalyptic total histories (e.g., Daniel, Animal Apocalypse and Apocalypse of Weeks in 1 Enoch).⁵⁷ Of the first, he argues that they assume a break in history with the Macedonian defeat of the Achaemenid empire that seals off pre-Hellenistic history as a self-contained unit. Although these texts tell total histories, they do so only from an ancient past until just before the rise of Macedonian power, excluding the "imperial present"⁵⁸ in which the writers live. Kosmin interprets this break in part through the idea of the cessation of prophecy, which he takes to be the end of these self-contained histories and contemporary with the rise of Macedonian and Seleucid power.⁵⁹ This group of texts, in Kosmin's reading, "present their indigenous pasts as the completed precondition of the Seleucid empire."⁶⁰

Kosmin's second strand of Hellenistic Jewish total history has more relevance for the four kingdoms motif in Sib. Or. 4. Kosmin argues that apocalyptic total histories periodize time from the beginning through lists of Near Eastern empires and Seleucid rule, where time ends in divine judgment.⁶¹ Texts such as Daniel and portions of 1 Enoch include the Seleucids in their descriptions of history, but relativizes them with the impending doom of divine judgment at the end of time. Kosmin compares these texts with the periodizing schemas of the Babylonian Dynastic Prophecy and the Iranian *Zand ī Wahman Yasn*, which, he argues, reflects earlier Zoroastrian ideas about time. Kosmin locates all of these periodizing strategies that culminate in the end of time as responses to Seleucid rule. He reads them as engaging in tactics of

56 Kosmin, *Time and Its Adversaries*, 22.

57 Kosmin, *Time and Its Adversaries*, 105–86.

58 Kosmin, *Time and Its Adversaries*, 105.

59 Kosmin, *Time and Its Adversaries*, 123–36.

60 Kosmin, *Time and Its Adversaries*, 138.

61 Kosmin, *Time and Its Adversaries*, 137.

“preceding, incorporating, and surpassing the Seleucid empire and exploding its logics of time.”⁶²

It is here that Kosmin discusses the four kingdoms motif, suggesting that the scholarly focus has been too backward-looking:

There has been protracted scholarly debate over the source of this apocalyptic periodization, particularly the sequence of four empires. Lines of debt and descent have been traced between the historiographic and religious traditions of Greece, Iran, Judea, and to a lesser extent Mesopotamia, reaching back into the Bronze Age. The disciplinary claims mirror, perhaps a little too closely, Hellenistic apologetics over national priority. Every possible path of derivation has been explored, as if an origin, like the source of the Nile, can be found (or would suffice as an explanation) ...⁶³

Kosmin then continues with his own proposal, which locates the four kingdoms motif in light of Seleucid historiography. He interprets not just apocalyptic eschatology generally, but also the four kingdoms motif specifically—in both Jewish and Iranian iterations (i.e., Daniel and the origins of the *Zand ī Wahman Yasn*)—as a set of third- and second-century-BCE reactions against Seleucid projections of continuous imperial time.⁶⁴

Kosmin does not discuss the Sibylline Oracles, but the four kingdoms motif in Sib. Or. 4 complicates his proposal. First, Sib. Or. 4 belongs to a body of literature that challenges the concept of prophecy’s cessation.⁶⁵ While some ancient Jewish texts such as 1 Maccabees, Prayer of Azariah, 2 Baruch, and Josephus’s *Against Apion* do attest to a notion of prophecy’s end, there are numerous Jewish texts that counter this idea, affirming prophecy’s continuation.⁶⁶ Surveying texts on both sides of the question of the cessation of prophecy, James Kugel has argued for a broadening and redefinition of prophecy in the postexilic period.⁶⁷ Hindy Najman has refined further the sense in which

62 Kosmin, *Time and Its Adversaries*, 138.

63 Kosmin, *Time and Its Adversaries*, 182.

64 Kosmin, *Time and Its Adversaries*, 137–86.

65 For a strong articulation of the argument for prophecy’s end, see Benjamin D. Sommer, “Did Prophecy Cease? Evaluating a Reevaluation,” *JBL* 115 (1996): 31–47.

66 As evidence for prophecy’s continuation, James L. Kugel cites: Wis 7:27; Philo, *Heir* 259; 1QH^a 4:16; 1 Cor 11:4–5; 12:10; 14:4–5; Josephus, *Ant.* 13.311–13; 20.97; 169. For the cessation of prophecy, Kugel cites the following: 1 Macc 4:46; 9:27; 14:41; Prayer of Azariah 15; 2 Bar 85:3; Josephus, *Ag. Ap.* 1.40–41. See James L. Kugel, *The Bible as it Was* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), 11–12.

67 Kugel, *The Bible as it Was*, 12.

prophecy is redefined in Jewish texts, arguing that “revelation inflected by destruction” becomes an enduring literary tendency within postexilic Judaism, as can be seen in texts such as Jubilees and 4 Ezra.⁶⁸ Najman’s category of “revelation inflected by destruction” is where I would locate Sib. Or. 4, and I have argued elsewhere that the prophetic rivalry espoused by the book participates in a much larger discourse that speaks to prophecy’s endurance as a literary strategy. Sib. Or. 4 does not give us information about prophetic practices in ancient Judaism, but it does speak to the persistent appeal of prophecy as a literary tendency, especially when we locate it alongside other texts, including Sib. Or. 3 and 5.⁶⁹ Given that Kosmin’s examples for the cessation of prophecy are also literary sources, Sib. Or. 4 raises important questions about the universality of prophecy’s decline in ancient Judaism.

Second, Sib. Or. 4 complicates Kosmin’s proposal that the four kingdoms motif is a particular third- and second-century-BCE response to Seleucid periodization of history. Sib. Or. 4 does not fit neatly with either of Kosmin’s models. Unlike his “Total History 1,” the oracle does not exclude Hellenistic history. It begins with the Assyrians and proceeds through the Macedonians, when the tenth and final generation occurs (4.88–101). Sib. Or. 4 resembles “Total History 2” more than “Total History 1,” by virtue of its resemblances with apocalyptic eschatology and use of the four kingdoms motif. Unlike the apocalyptic eschatology of other texts in Kosmin’s “Total History 2,” however, the oracle does not engage the Seleucids directly. It assigns one generation to the Macedonians, and then breaks off. The four kingdoms motif ends with the Macedonians, without giving any indication that the kingdom will be fragmented.

Granted, the text is a challenging test case. One must first accept the idea that at least two redactional layers are even present in this text to analyze it as part of Kosmin’s proposal. Dating from about 80 CE, however, Sib. Or. 4 is at a smaller remove from the Seleucid era than the *Zand ī Wahman Yasn*, which Kosmin does consider.⁷⁰ In addition, the disappearance of the last generation at Sib. Or. 4.102 can be read viably as a literary seam, marking redactional activity and suggesting an earlier date for the four kingdoms oracle. While there is some reconstructive work necessary to bring Sib. Or. 4 into a conversation about early iterations of the four kingdoms motif, the text does merit analysis alongside Kosmin’s other literary examples.

68 Najman, *Losing the Temple*, 6–7.

69 Stewart Lester, *Prophetic Rivalry*, esp. 5–17, 214–15.

70 The text dates from the ninth or tenth century CE (Kosmin, *Time and Its Adversaries*, 177).

If one accepts that the four kingdoms motif belongs to an earlier layer, then we can only speculate about the original oracle. The speculations of Collins and Flusser, however, complicate Kosmin's proposal, as they both read the text as anti-Macedonian, rather than anti-Seleucid. Flusser reconstructs the four kingdoms material as directly concerned about Macedonian rule: "if we are right, history ended in the original source with divine or political vengeance against the Macedonian empire for the atrocities which it had committed against the Persians."⁷¹ Collins is more circumspect about the ending, wondering whether Macedonia was destroyed by another kingdom or whether history ended with the Macedonians.⁷² He leans toward the latter possibility, suggesting further that the conflagration described in Sib. Or. 4.174–92 was also original to the Hellenistic oracle, and would have followed the Macedonian kingdom.⁷³ Either way, Collins reads Sib. Or. 4 as "anti-Hellenistic propaganda."⁷⁴ Because only one generation is assigned to Macedonia, Collins's reconstruction, dates the original oracle shortly after the life of Alexander.⁷⁵ If Collins is right, this is an earlier date than Kosmin's other examples. The timing would undermine the suggestion that the four kingdoms source behind Sib. Or. 4 was a direct response to Seleucid rule. All of these reconstructive speculations raise important questions for Kosmin's proposal.

Sibylline Oracles 4 does not disprove Kosmin's model. Read a certain way, Sib. Or. 4 could be compatible with Kosmin's proposal that the four kingdoms motif is anti-Seleucid. Kosmin makes an important point that texts can seal history off before the time of their composition; this opens up the possibility of a later date for the four kingdoms oracle than the first generation of Macedonian rule. The earlier layer of Sib. Or. 4 could have been looking backward at the Macedonians, rather than being roughly contemporaneous with them. Collins's reminder about the unknown end of the oracle could leave space for another power to succeed Alexander, and perhaps allow for an anti-Seleucid motive for composition. Finally, it is possible that the term "Macedonians" (Μακκηδόνες, 4.88, 95) could be inclusive of the Seleucids, or even refer to them directly, as it does in the writings of Strabo, Tacitus, Josephus, and others.⁷⁶ Ultimately, our knowledge of the underlying text of Sib. Or. 4 is too inconclusive, and an exception need not dismantle Kosmin's general rule.

71 Flusser, "The Four Empires," 151.

72 Collins, "The Place of the Fourth Sibyl," 373–74.

73 Collins, "The Place of the Fourth Sibyl," 374.

74 Collins, *Daniel*, 168.

75 Collins, *Daniel*, 167; idem, "Sibylline Oracles," 381.

76 Charles Edson, "The Seleucid Empire and the Literary Evidence," *CP* 53 (1958): 153–70. I am grateful to Paul Kosmin for this suggestion and this reference.

The fact remains, however, that in its preserved, reconstructed form Sib. Or. 4 does not align neatly with either type of the totalizing histories Kosmin assesses as anti-Seleucid. The earlier layer periodizes time in a way that is inclusive of the Hellenistic era, but not of the Seleucids. It seals time after Alexander, without gesturing toward a fragmented kingdom to follow. If Collins is right that the end of the book (4.175–92) may also be original, it envisions a dramatic end of the world—not to mention a resurrection—but it does so without drawing the Seleucids into the crosshairs of divine judgment. Either way, Sib. Or. 4 raises important questions about the universality of the four kingdoms motif as a distinctively anti-Seleucid response. Sibylline Oracles 4 attests to the possibility, at least, that anti-Seleucid texts could have taken up ways of thinking about time and political power already found elsewhere (e.g., in the underlying four kingdoms oracle of Sib. Or. 4) with new urgency under the Seleucids. This motif may have been especially prominent among the Seleucid empire's subject communities, as Kosmin argues,⁷⁷ but Sib. Or. 4 functions as an example that it was perhaps not unique to them.

Kosmin's first comment on the four kingdoms motif—that scholarship should emphasize the deployment of the motif over its origins—resonates with Najman's call to interrogate the forward-moving trajectories of Jewish texts and figures, or their "traditionary processes."⁷⁸ Sibylline Oracles 4 only allows us to speculate about the original deployment of the four kingdoms motif, but as I have just argued, even those speculations raise important questions for Kosmin's proposal. What we can do more readily is study the traditionary process of this motif, tracing the ways it is transformed within the book. This, too, involves imaginative reconstruction. If we accept the suggestion that there are at least two layers to this text, however, which the presence of a textual seam in 4.102 makes likely, we can apply a forward-moving literary analysis to this motif, asking after its characteristics within the fuller form of Sib. Or. 4.

The traditionary process of the four kingdoms motif in Sib. Or. 4 constructs a temporality that is multiple, fragmented, and less linear. Within the earlier

77 Regarding the four kingdoms motif, Kosmin writes, "I would suggest, instead, that what must be accounted for is ... the concurrent emergence in the third and second centuries BCE and within the core regions of the Seleucid empire of a historiographical and theological obsession with such totalizing, highly schematized periodizations. These segmentations of history are the central concern of the eschatological total histories ... they are not outlined with such clarity or centrality in earlier texts; and they do not appear elsewhere in the Hellenistic world (including Ptolemaic Egypt). We are dealing with a phenomenon specific to the Seleucid empire's subject communities" (Kosmin, *Time and Its Adversaries*, 182–83).

78 Najman, *Losing the Temple and Recovering the Future*, 46–48.

layer of the book, there is an overlay of kingdoms onto generations (4.49–101). Multiple timelines converge here, as the promised ten generations are distributed onto various kingdoms. The reader has been prepared for ten generations in 4.20 and 4.47, but the kingdoms emerge unannounced. Already in the original oracle, the sibyl names multiple ways of periodizing time, and this creates multiple timelines. A reader's sense of the progress of time could differ, depending on whether they were counting by generations or by kingdoms. The early layer of the text, then, contains at least two timelines. When this material is redacted, a third timeline is produced, albeit one that is far less linear.

With the addition of the Romans after the Macedonians in 4.101, the line of kingdoms continues, but the line of generations comes to a halt before it reaches its end. The final generation is never directly assigned; the fourth sibyl only gestures towards it, in a promise of destruction coming to the Persians (4.87). The sibyl's generational periodizing of time breaks off after the Macedonians, but the future extends onward. Sibylline Oracles 4 continues to describe Roman military destruction and natural disasters, leading to a final conflagration, but the fourth sibyl does not locate the audience in any particular generation, orienting them on her earlier timelines. Instead, with the break after the Macedonians, her prophecy describes one long generation. This shift simultaneously fragments the sibyl's generational timeline and creates a new timeline, with a prolonged Roman era.

As this Roman era stretches out, the fourth sibyl's depiction of time becomes less linear. Sibylline Oracles 4.102–161 depicts a chaotic mass of military clashes, including the Roman destruction of Jerusalem, and natural disasters. The line of generations has been frozen in time, and the fifth kingdom continues until the intervention of divine judgment (4.171–78)—except that there is another interruption, from the sibyl herself: a call to repentance (4.152–61). Whether the lines are broken by the dropping off of a tenth generation, the extension of time under Roman rule, or the prophetic interruption of the sibyl's invitation to repent, sibylline temporality here is decidedly less linear.

One literary effect of this plurality and fragmentation is to dislocate the reader in the timeline(s), disorienting them about exactly where they are.⁷⁹ In

79 I have not found evidence of early readers remarking on this quality of the text, but that may be due in part to the uses to which early Christian writers put the fourth sibyl. Clement of Alexandria, for example, cites her anti-temple speech in 4.27–30 against pagan worship (Clement, *Protrepticus* 4.50.1; Collins, "Sibylline Oracles," 384; Toca, "Greek Reception," 296–70); Lactantius appeals to descriptions of the flood and the final conflagration in Sib. Or. 4 to support his argument for the anger of God (Lactantius, *De ira dei* 23; Collins, "Sibylline Oracles," 384–89). It might not be in the rhetorical interests of these writers to undermine the certainty of the sibyl's prophecy by noting the instability

Sib. Or. 4, the ultimate future is certain: divine destruction by fire, followed by a resurrection and judgment (4.175–92). This is deeply connected with traditional associations between sibyls and doom, a trope which is re-purposed in the Jewish-Christian collection to include ethical instruction, as I discussed above. The predicted future in this book, however, is both certain and unpredictable. It is inevitable, in a final sense. But with the addition of Rome as an “indecisive prolongation of the series of empires without reference to the numerical patterns,”⁸⁰ as Collins has it, the timing of the future becomes more unstable. Even granting that ancient readers may have been able to locate references to specific events, such as the eruption of Vesuvius, the logic of the book espouses a much less linear view of time with the insertion of Roman material, making it harder for a reader to track where they are in the sibyl’s own total history. Kosmin’s insightful research on ancient historiographies opens up new possibilities for understanding Sib. Or. 4 here, as this is something like his “imperial present,”⁸¹ albeit under a different imperial power. There is an extended Roman era in the fourth sibyl’s telling, sudden in its emergence and unpredictable in its duration. Although its future destruction is definite, the reader does not know it that will happen.

The fragmented, multiple, less linear temporality that results from the transformation of the four kingdoms motif in Sib. Or. 4 is not unique within the sibylline collection. I have explored Jewish-Christian sibylline temporality more fully elsewhere, and the dynamics of time found within this book occur in other sibylline books as well.⁸² For example, generations are broken off again in Sib. Or. 1–2, where Christian redaction of the material results in a loss of two generations from a ten-generation schema.⁸³ Seven generations are introduced in book 1, with the seventh appearing at 1.307. Following this, there is a long gap, where material about Jesus and an anti-Jewish description of Jewish dispersion is inserted (1.387–400). Then, somewhat suddenly, a tenth generation appears in 2.15. Generations eight and nine are omitted. In books 1, 2, and 4, sibylline timelines, while having some initial linearity, demonstrate

of time. In this chapter, I am not asserting that temporal instability is the only way to understand transformation of the four kingdoms motif in the book. I am suggesting an alternate interpretive possibility for a literary phenomenon noted by scholars interested in redactional analysis of Sib. Or. 4.

80 Collins, “The Place of the Fourth Sibyl,” 373.

81 Kosmin, *Time and Its Adversaries*, 105.

82 See Olivia Stewart Lester, “Views of the World to Come in the Jewish-Christian Sibylline Oracles,” in *Dreams, Visions, Imaginations: Jewish, Christian, and Gnostic Views of the World to Come*, ed. Tobias Nicklas and Jens Schröter, BZNW (Berlin: De Gruyter, forthcoming), 261–82.

83 Collins, “Sibylline Oracles,” 345; Lightfoot, *Sibylline Oracles*, 109–52.

breaks, gaps, and sometimes even rupture⁸⁴ when we read forwards as well as backwards.

4 Conclusion

Sibylline Oracles 4 contains prophecies of destruction against the Assyrians, Medes, Persians, Macedonians, and Romans. Both David Flusser and John Collins see in this oracle an early iteration of the four kingdoms motif, to which the Romans were added later by a late-first century redactor. In this chapter, I have brought the redactional conclusions of Collins and Flusser into conversation with Paul Kosmin's recent proposal that the four kingdoms motif is primarily a response to Seleucid periodized time. Collins and Flusser's reconstructions pose important questions for Kosmin's proposal, as does the text of Sib. Or. 4, which does not align neatly with Kosmin's two versions of Seleucid subjects' total history. At the same time, Kosmin's sophisticated readings of ancient Jewish historiographical texts calls the security of anti-Macedonian dating of Sib. Or. 4 into question. Sibylline Oracles 4 is not incompatible with Kosmin's model. It serves as an example of the possibility, however, that the four kingdoms motif might have been attested elsewhere, and its use may have intensified during the Seleucid era, rather than being created by it.

After considering the text of Sib. Or. 4, broken apart into its sources and redactional layers, I examined the forward-moving transformation of the four kingdoms motif, drawing on Hindy Najman's notion of "traditionary processes."⁸⁵ The traditionary process of the four kingdoms motif reveals a sibylline temporality that is multiple, fragmentary, and less linear. I suggested that, when taken from a literary perspective, these characteristics could serve to disorient a reader of Sib. Or. 4, dislocating them within a chaotic final era. Drawing on Kosmin's research, I suggested that the extension of time during the Roman era could amount to a kind of prophetic "imperial present,"⁸⁶ a long final generation that is never explicitly named. Finally, I also noted similarities between the fragmentation of generations in Sib. Or. 4 and Sib. Or. 1–2, where two generations are lost. An analysis of the four kingdoms motif contributes to a sense that in its fragmentation, instability, and chaos, the future in Jewish-Christian sibylline temporality is simultaneously inevitable and unstable.

84 Cf. Benjamin, "Theses on the Philosophy of History;" Najman, *Losing the Temple*, 1–25.

85 Najman, *Losing the Temple*, 46–48.

86 Kosmin, *Time and Its Adversaries*, 105.

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The Generation of Iron and the Final Stumbling Block: The Present Time in Hesiod's *Works and Days* 106–201 and Barnabas 4

Kylie Crabbe

1 Introduction

The four (or five) kingdom paradigm is a way of playing with time. It offers a set of symbols for structuring history, explaining the past and current circumstances, as well as the future, while situating the reader's time within an overarching pattern. It is arguably so effective a tool for this that it is found in texts that are diverse in genre and in their literary and cultural communities, as writers constantly recalibrate the timeline for each new "present" time.

In what follows I consider texts that are, in many ways, very different from one another, in order to explore elements of this structuring of history and, in particular, how it shapes various authors' portraits of their own time. Part one considers an exceptionally early text, Hesiod's account of generations in *Works and Days* 106–201,¹ and some common themes taken up in later (Augustan period) Latin texts. Part two turns to the Epistle of Barnabas 4 as a recalibration of Daniel 7. In different ways, I suggest, these texts use the paradigm to interpret significant features of the present time by placing it within a larger framework.

2 The Sequence of Metals and Five Generations

2.1 Hesiod's *Works and Days*

Hesiod's Greek-language didactic poem *Works and Days* addresses Perseus as the object of the poem's instruction.² The poem comprises an assortment of

1 West calculates the possible dates of Hesiod's birth as between 750 and 720 BCE, with the writing of *Works and Days* shortly following the death of his father, most likely before 690 (M. L. West, *Hesiod: Works and Days*, [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978], 30–33).

2 On intertextual links between this poem and Hesiod's other works, see Jenny Strauss Clay, *Hesiod's Cosmos* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 5–10.

materials on diverse themes.³ The myth of five generations⁴ comes early on, as the second of two stories about how evil and vice entered human experience. The first story (lines 47–105) is that of Prometheus and Pandora, in which evil and suffering are unleashed through the opening of the lidded storage jar (94–95).⁵ It concludes with an explanation that “countless other miseries roam among humankind; for the earth is full of evils” (100–1),⁶ and the summary statement, “Thus it is not possible in any way to evade the mind of Zeus” (105). The myth of generations (106–201) is introduced in this context as another story (ἔτερον ... λόγον, 106) of origins, unfolding as an overview of how suffering and vice have developed over the generations.⁷

Hesiod describes four metallic generations (gold, silver, bronze, and iron) with a generation of heroes inserted between the bronze and iron ones. There is a general consensus that the sequence of the four metals is not original to Hesiod or even of Greek origin; most suggest it derives from ancient Near Eastern traditions, and that Hesiod added the heroes generation into the paradigm.⁸ Although various ancient Near Eastern texts also portray some form of the kingdom paradigm, including examples involving the metals, the best explanation is of a shared earlier source; there is no extant text that might

3 Clay, *Hesiod's Cosmos*, 31–32. West notes that the poem draws heavily on wisdom literature (West, *Hesiod: Works and Days*, 22–25).

4 There is some contention about whether Hesiod describes five or six generations. I argue below that there are five. Throughout this essay I translate γένος as generation, not “race.” Given the contemporary recognition of issues about race as a construct, and the sense that this does not in any case perfectly capture the Greek, I have avoided the term; where it is used in citations of the primary text I have adapted the citation by using the Greek. While recognizing that “generation” is also not a perfect English translation, this choice is also supported by Hesiod’s later description of the heroes as “the generation (γενεή) before our own” (160).

5 The name is literally all-gifts, because she was created through the contributions of “all who live upon Olympus” (80–82).

6 Unless otherwise specified, throughout I use the LCL translations of the key texts, except Daniel, for which I use the NRSV. In this citation the LCL translation has been modified for inclusive language.

7 The introduction to the myth of generations (106–8) implies it is intended to complement the Prometheus and Pandora story (A. S. Brown, “From the Golden Age to the Isles of the Blest,” *Mnemosyne* 51 [1998]: 385–410, esp. 387).

8 Clay, *Hesiod's Cosmos*, 81. Haijo Jan Westra and Milo Nikolic, “The Logic of the Myth of the Ages in Hesiod’s *Works and Days*,” *Mouseion* 6.3 (2006): 313. Most suggest the myth is not in keeping with other ideas from Hesiod, while ancient Near Eastern versions of the myth do not incorporate Greek ideas (which might be expected if they were drawing on Hesiod’s version). For detailed discussion of possible sources, as well as plausible explanations for the transfer of these ideas into Greece at this time, see West, *Hesiod: Works and Days*, 172–77.

be considered Hesiod's source.⁹ Despite the eastern elements, Hesiod's version incorporates numerous Greek features in the descriptions of each of the generations. A. S. Brown speculates that Hesiod's audience would likely already be familiar with a version of the myth involving the four metals and that they would find the adaptation of the underlying myth exotic and enticing, while also recognizing the Greek motifs with which it is merged.¹⁰

2.1.1 Hesiod's Version of the Five Generations and Its Key Themes

Hesiod sets out the generations in descriptions that encourage comparison of their key attributes, including similarities in the descriptions of each generation's creation, behavior, food sources, and ultimate end. He informs Perses that the golden generation were the first human beings created by the gods on Olympus, during Cronos's divine reign.¹¹ They lived a life, like the gods themselves, "entirely apart from toil and distress" (112–13), and devoid of evil. Their lives were marked by wealth and blessing and their deaths were simply like falling asleep, following which they have become "fine spirits upon the earth, guardians of mortal human beings," walking the earth invisibly to observe "judgements and cruel deeds" and to give wealth (122–26).¹²

By contrast, the second generation made by those on Olympus—silver—were "much worse" and "like the golden one neither in body nor in mind" (129). They remained in foolish infancy for a hundred years, only to die shortly after reaching puberty as a result of their folly, engaging in hubris against one another and irreverence to the gods. After their time they took up residence under the earth. Despite all this, and although they attracted Zeus's anger, they still enjoy blessing, "in second place, but all the same honor attends upon these as well" (142).

The third generation are worse still. This bronze generation, again noted for its utter difference from the preceding one, is made by Zeus alone, from ash trees. This generation are "terrible and strong" (145), massive in stature and interested only in war and violence, with weapons (and houses) of bronze. The "frightful" generation are ultimately "overpowered by one another's hands" and descend "nameless into the dank house of chilly Hades" (152–55).

9 John J. Collins, *A Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 164–65. See also West, *Hesiod: Works and Days*, 172–77.

10 Brown, "From the Golden Age," 387.

11 Although the metals are often thought to represent declining value, West points out that iron was also expensive (West, *Hesiod: Works and Days*, 173), and Brown outlines numerous other connotations of metals, including gold's incorruptibility and association with the gods (Brown, "From the Golden Age," 392–95).

12 The generation's end is described as the time when "the earth covered up this γένος" (121).

At this point in the unfolding account, things change. Hesiod says that Zeus again made another generation, but this one is “more just and superior” (158), indeed they are “the γένος of men-heroes, who are called demigods” (159–60). For the first time Hesiod situates the story in relation to his (and his audience’s) own time, saying that this is “the generation before our own upon the boundless earth” (160). Hesiod refers to great battles of the Greek past, in Thebes and Troy. And, although they lead to the heroes’ death, these battles are nobler than the self-destructive violence of the bronze generation. Zeus settles them in the utopian “Islands of the Blessed” at the limits of the earth, where they enjoy the land’s extraordinary fecund provisions as “happy heroes” (168–73).

With this positive situation for the heroes still fresh in the reader’s mind, Hesiod introduces the remaining generation ominously: “If only then I did not have to live among the fifth men (ἀνδράσιν) but could have either died first or been born afterward! For now the γένος is indeed one of iron” (174–76). This generation of iron—an inversion of the golden generation—“will not cease from toil and distress by day, nor from being worn out by suffering at night, and the gods will give them grievous cares” (176–78). Although they will enjoy some mix of good things, Zeus will destroy them also “when at birth the hair on their temples will be quite grey” (181). Such a collapse of the natural order will also be evident in the breakdown of concord between family, guests and hosts, and friends, including dishonor towards ageing parents with no regard for divine retribution. They will resort to violence and dishonesty, and be marked by envy. At such a time, “Reverence” and “Indignation” will flee to Olympus, while “Baleful pains will be left for mortal human beings, and there will be no safeguard against evil” (200–1). These are the bleak, concluding words of Hesiod’s account of the myth.¹³

Hesiod thus uses the paradigm to structure Greek history from the mythical past and to place his own time in that context. In doing so, he weaves in numerous tropes of decline which both rely upon and highlight the temporality of the paradigm. Structured comparisons between the generations draw out the progressive elements of decline: hubris and impiety develop over the silver and bronze generations and take up new forms in the iron generation. While death begins for the members of the golden generation as a process simply like falling asleep, later humans bring about their own destruction, whether scurrilously as in the case of the violence between members of the

13 Hesiod then offers further exhortation to Perses, in the form of an animal fable that follows the section on the myth of generations.

bronze generation, or through war (presented more positively) in the generation of heroes.¹⁴ From a life of ease for the golden generation, the need for labor emerges as some kind of response to, or result of, the emerging vice and impiety.¹⁵ In somewhat disturbing images involving distortions of infancy, the silver generation exhibits an extended infancy and never reaches beyond puberty while, in events still to unfold in the iron generation, both immaturity and decay will appear together in infants with grey hair.¹⁶

Thus, there are numerous tropes across the generations which highlight decline. But Hesiod does not use the paradigm to indicate simply a continuous downward path, as presented over the four kingdoms by, for instance, Ovid or Daniel. The generation of heroes in the account as Hesiod tells it interrupts the decline, albeit briefly.¹⁷ His account of this era reflects a nostalgia typical of treatments of the Greek past—but, as discussed below, its very ability to interrupt decline may suggest hope for further change in the audience's future.

Despite these important themes, Hesiod's paradigm does more than provide a temporal framework. Through the successive generations Hesiod simultaneously supplies a multi-layered explanation of the *present* world, both its cosmology and its vices. Members of the golden generation continue in the world, though hidden, as guardians overseeing human interactions. The silver ones remain blessed from a residence under the earth. The bronze are left in chilly Hades. Meanwhile the heroes enjoy an island utopia which is likewise portrayed as continuing to exist at the edges of the ocean as Hesiod and his audience endure the iron generation. There is a sense in which each of the earlier stages all explain some aspect of the current cosmology, in a manner unlike the paradigm in Danielic versions discussed below.¹⁸ Hesiod's account transects the temporal framework with a synchronic, spatial claim.

14 The war of the heroes may be presented more positively than the violence of the bronze generation because it is not violence among members of the same group, but a kind of violence that is presented as an outworking of bravery, as heroes defend the good from some "other."

15 See below for discussion of Virgil's interaction with this theme.

16 Momigliano discusses ancient writers including Seneca and Florus, who represent the periods of history with portions of the human lifecycle, thus suggesting the process of transition between empires is natural (Arnaldo Momigliano, "The Origins of Universal History," in *The Poet and the Historian: Essays in Literary and Historical Biblical Criticism*, ed. Richard Elliott Friedman, HSS [Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1983], 136).

17 Westra and Nikolic frame the comparisons between generations both in absolute terms (gold and iron are the best and worst) and relative terms (the heroes generation interrupts the decline, being relatively better than either bronze or iron) (Westra and Nikolic, "The Logic," 315–16).

18 The statue of Daniel 2 may imply some continuing function of past empires, which are described from the head down and remain in the same object until the statue's destruction;

The description of each generation also builds up a picture of Hesiod's concerns about the present time. Indeed, it neatly complements the Prometheus and Pandora story. Brown suggests that the historical structuring of the paradigm enables Hesiod to offer "an aetiology of vice."¹⁹ But the particular behaviors described are also important. He argues:

Put together, the past bad races account for the origin of the vices which Hesiod considers to be most prevalent among his contemporaries, and to present the greatest threat to their wellbeing: the idleness, violence, and unrighteousness demonstrated by the silver and bronze races are all forms of *hybris*. The iron race combine all these with a few new forms of degeneracy—their wrong-doing (perjury, swindling and the like) is characterized by a certain increased sophistication and emphasis on deceit (220–24; 250–51; 258–69; 322–34).²⁰

In these various ways, I suggest, Hesiod returns the focus to the present time. He gives his own account of what is wrong now, set within a narrative of how it has emerged in his society and colored by nostalgia for a past supposedly immune from such disaster. Meanwhile, the diachronic elements raise the question: what should the audience (represented by Perses) expect will happen next?

2.1.2 The $\nu\upsilon\nu$ and Future in the Context of Hesiod's Five-Generation Paradigm

Hesiod unambiguously states the position of the present time within his schema. Several of the texts discussed below engage in a kind of temporal play, supplying coded information for privileged readers to identify the present time. By contrast, Hesiod simply tells the reader the temporal information: the heroes were the generation directly before his own and "now"—the time of the reader—is the generation of iron.

The position of the present time in Hesiod's account, though explicitly identified, nonetheless contributes to a point of contention in scholarly discussion. There is some disagreement about how many periods there are in Hesiod's paradigm. This might seem rather surprising given each generation is actually

this is still different from noting the ongoing existence of a group in a kind of mythic cosmology in Hesiod's poem.

19 Brown, "From the Golden Age," 388. For Westra and Nikolic, Hesiod's generations constitute a "more abstract, theoretical and complex, but strictly logical exploration of the problem of good and evil as an explanation of the human condition" (Westra and Nikolic, "The Logic," 318).

20 Brown, "From the Golden Age," 389.

numbered (109, 127, 143, 157, 174), including when Hesiod bemoans that he has to live among the “fifth men (ἀνδράσιν)” for “now” the generation is of iron (174–76). There is no enumeration of a “sixth” γένος. However, many interpreters argue for six, dividing the iron generation into an initial period in which there is a mix of good things with bad (179), and a second iron generation during which there is no longer any good and everything will collapse into the bleak, final picture Hesiod offers.²¹

However, I suggest that Hesiod’s placement of the present time confirms his enumeration of the five generations and clarifies no sixth, additional generation within the description of the iron generation is required. Hesiod lives *within* the iron generation, a period which spans both before and after the moment of his writing, not the transition point between two generations.²² That the description of iron is longer is consistent with other texts which spend longer detailing the period of the writer’s time.²³ The prophetic, future tense elements in the description of the iron generation are simply a further description of the current period as it continues.²⁴

Although sharing the same period, in another sense Hesiod distances himself from the iron generation and its pitfalls. As noted above, by providing the larger framework of generations, Hesiod describes the beginning and escalation of the kinds of vices and impiety he wishes to criticize in his own time. These are not traits he identifies in himself. But does Hesiod see any way out of the bleak picture with which he concludes?

There are two key ways in which readers have found hints of a more positive future in Hesiod’s text, inspired by either: (1) the generation of heroes, or (2) the golden generation. When the heroes suddenly interrupt the trajectory

21 Westra and Nikolic argue that six generations allows for a parallel structure between the first “mythological” three generations, and a remaining three “historical” generations—the latter beginning with the heroes (Westra and Nikolic, “The Logic,” 317). Although it is helpful to highlight parallels, for instance, between the gold and heroes generations, this does not require a sixth generation.

22 Hesiod’s wish to have been born before or after the current generation (175), discussed further below, likewise does not support a sixth generation within the description of iron. He is not longing to have been born within the time of the further decline prophesied here, but something beyond it.

23 The cumulative effect of the problems which build up over time also results in more elements requiring comment by the fifth generation.

24 Development continues over the course of some other generations, for instance the Bronze generation becomes increasingly worse until they eventually bring about one another’s destruction. The iron generation’s continued decline likewise does not require a further generation as explanation.

of decline, they show that decline, once begun, is “not always irreversible.”²⁵ Brown suggests this may indicate to Hesiod’s audience that change remains possible. This assurance from the past could inform the future,²⁶ though the further decline is also couched as a form of prophecy.²⁷ It predicts a grim collapse, when humans will be abandoned by those who return to Olympus. Jenny Strauss Clay argues that Hesiod’s purpose is to exhort his reader, through Perseus, to overcome the vice and impiety that has caused the decline to alter this future.²⁸ This may be a source of hope.

Alternatively, the golden generation may offer a solution. Brown considers the golden generation, particularly through its association with the gods, to be an unattainable ideal—but one which nonetheless has “the capacity to inspire.”²⁹ Such inspiration could also be a part of overcoming the vice and impiety which is prophesied to continue the decline. Or the larger framework may suggest a cyclical *return* to a golden generation. When identifying the present time with the generation of iron, Hesiod says he wishes he “could have either died first or been born afterward!” (175), implying that he imagines a further period after his own.³⁰ This suggests to some interpreters that Hesiod has taken the tradition of four declining successive periods and transformed it into a cyclic model, in which a return to a golden age should be anticipated after the foretold demise of the iron generation.³¹

25 Brown, “From the Golden Age,” 396.

26 This suggests an interesting convergence with the work done by Stuckenbruck on Jewish and early Christian texts. Stuckenbruck observes important similarities in the ways these texts structure time, particularly with regard to the way past events provide assurance about the future events still anticipated. See Loren T. Stuckenbruck, “How Much Evil Does the Christ Event Solve? Jesus and Paul in Relation to Jewish ‘Apocalyptic’ Thought,” in *Evil in Second Temple Judaism and Early Christianity*, ed. Chris Keith and Loren T. Stuckenbruck, WUNT 2/417 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016), 142–68, esp. 161, 165.

27 West, *Hesiod: Works and Days*, 174.

28 Clay, *Hesiod’s Cosmos*, 33–34.

29 Brown, “From the Golden Age,” 397. Of course, it is one thing to convince a reader that “nothing is better than a quiet agricultural existence” and the human “ideal state does not involve fighting or sailing,” as Brown suggests the golden generation’s model may do (“From the Golden Age,” 397). It is another thing to give the reader the material or other resources required to overcome the struggle Hesiod identifies within present circumstances.

30 See Westra and Nikolic, “The Logic,” 317.

31 Westra and Nikolic, “The Logic,” 319. There are some less convincing, pseudo-scientific elements to Westra and Nikolic’s argument, for instance as they seek to use trigonometric functions to graph the cyclical pattern of rise and decline across Hesiod’s generations (“The Logic,” 319–22).

A reading which finds hope for arresting the decline through a further temporal rotation back to a golden generation, though explaining Hesiod's cryptic comment at 175, might not account for all features of his text, such as its non-temporal elements. Alternatively, if the heroes show that decline is not inevitable, the prophecy of the final part of the iron generation may be recast as an authoritative warning for his audience to change their ways. Whether or not these options provide a way to reverse decline, the ambiguity remains, with the possibility of reading different futures into the paradigm. As seen below, it seems that some of Hesiod's ancient readers, at least, exploited this ambiguity.

2.2 *Recalibrations in Augustan Literature*

Themes from Hesiod's myth of generations are taken in various different directions by later writers. Helen Van Noorden notes receptions of Hesiod's generations in, among other sources, Plato, Aratus's *Phaenomena*, and Horace's works.³² Here I focus on different adaptations in the works of two Latin writers from the Augustan period: Virgil and Ovid.

2.2.1 Reimagining the Golden Age in Virgil

The concept of a golden age took on a life of its own "out of Hesiod's idyllic image of a golden race ruled by Cronos,"³³ and in multiple works Virgil engages with the golden age under Saturn, the Roman god identified with Cronos. In fact, this theme is often used to track development in Virgil's writing.³⁴ *Eclogae* 4.4–10 gives a description of a golden age which has already been realized in the birth of a child.³⁵ The era is characterized by traits associated with life under Saturn, such as ease, blessing, and fertility. In the *Georgics*, Virgil introduces ideas about Jupiter imposing beneficial struggle (*Georg.* 1.121–59).³⁶ By the time of the *Aeneid*, Saturn's time of blessing is a thing only of the past. King Evander, Aeneas, and his son wander through fields discussing the "golden

32 Helen Van Noorden, *Playing Hesiod: The "Myth of the Races" in Classical Antiquity*, CCS (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 174–96, 205–7. Brown ("From the Golden Age") focuses particularly on how the golden age is taken up in other literature.

33 Van Noorden, *Playing Hesiod*, 2.

34 Elen Theodorakopoulos, "Closure: The Book of Virgil," in *The Cambridge Companion to Virgil*, ed. Charles Martindale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 157.

35 The prophetic style of *Eclogae* 4 prompted its use for divination, and some ancient Christian interpretation associated the birth of the child that inaugurates the golden age with Jesus. Slater identifies here a reference to expectations of a child for Octavia and Mark Antony (D. A. Slater, "Was the Fourth Eclogue Written to Celebrate the Marriage of Octavia to Mark Antony? A Literary Parallel," *CR* 26 [1912]: 114–19; Likewise, see Fairclough and Gould in the LCL *Virgil*, 1:2).

36 Van Noorden, *Playing Hesiod*, 11.

ages men tell of" (8.324–35) under Saturn's reign, like a tour of an ancient site and past civilization. The passage evokes nostalgia about such a life of bliss and ease, but the time is definitely long gone, without any sense of return. Rather, it is a reimagined golden age under *Jupiter* which is the real focus in the *Aeneid*.³⁷

Virgil's twelve-book Latin epic, the *Aeneid* (written from the battle of Actium in 30–31 BCE until his death in 19 BCE) plays with time in numerous ways.³⁸ But the primary way is by setting his story about Roman empire in the past world of Aeneas. A series of prophecies in Books 1, 6, and 8 are set out as *vaticinia ex eventu*—that is, the prophecies describe events which are in the future from the perspective of the text (and the time of Aeneas), but the historical past from the perspective of its readers. These "prophecies" enable Virgil not only to interpret the significance of the "future" events which are described, but to assert the endpoint to which they lead: *imperium sine fine* (1.279). Indeed, the "future" rule which Jupiter discloses to Venus (Aeneas's goddess mother) in Book 1 will be brought about by "the Trojan Caesar" descended from the "great Iulius" (286, 288). The reader knows who this is and that his time is now.

Despite Virgil's emphasis on the historical moment under Augustus, Karl Galinsky rightly notes the significance that he has written an "Aeneid" and not an "Augusteid."³⁹ That is, it is important to the unfolding epic that Virgil uses the past stories of Aeneas's struggle to frame the current experience of Rome. The struggle does not simply undermine the text's Augustan triumphalism, however, as some "pessimistic" readers have claimed.⁴⁰ Rather, I suggest,

37 Virgil follows the pattern also seen in Hesiod's poem, where the first, golden generation is ruled by Cronos and later generations by Cronos's son, Zeus. In the *Aeneid*, the earlier golden age was ruled by Saturn, while the later reimagined golden age is ruled by his son, Jupiter. The reason labor emerges is starkly different in Virgil's and Hesiod's portraits. See Karl Galinsky, *Augustan Culture: An Interpretive Introduction* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 93–97, 121–25.

38 For example, with parallels through allusions to literary forerunners, especially Homer (with the first six books offering a reinterpreted *Odyssey*, and the last six the *Iliad*). See David Quint, "Repetition and Ideology in the Aeneid," *MDTC* 23 (1989): 9–54, esp. 9.

39 Galinsky, *Augustan Culture*, 125.

40 These "pessimistic" readings identify a reluctance to affirm empire in the ambiguities and hesitations of Virgil's text. Galinsky frames this as a response to the post-war environment in the second half of the twentieth century (Galinsky, *Augustan Culture*, 3–9). See also S. J. Harrison, "Some Views of the Aeneid in the Twentieth Century," in *Oxford Readings in Vergil's Aeneid*, ed. S. J. Harrison (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 1–20; and Stefan Krauter, "Vergils Evangelium und das lukanische Epos? Überlegungen zu Gattung und Theologie des lukanischen Doppelwerkes," in *Die Apostelgeschichte im Kontext antiker und frühchristlicher Historiographie*, ed. Jörg Frey, Clare K. Rothschild, and Jens Schröter, BZNW 162 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2009), 240–42.

Virgil's playing with time is what enables both the struggle, and the ultimately triumphalist portrait of Augustan Rome, to coexist. Ambiguity and struggle characterize the events of Aeneas, and the wars the readers know have taken place since his time, but these are all in the past for the reader.

The historical review in *Aen.* 6.752–892 confirms that the reader's present time is part of a reinterpreted golden age. Here Aeneas takes a journey to the underworld, where he views a parade of historical characters with a commentary supplied by his father, Anchises. Again the scene couches characters and events in a *vaticinium ex eventu*. This creates certain ironies in the text. Towns which (the reader knows) will become insignificant and disreputable characters are mentioned, while significant events are *not* mentioned. Jumping over key moments in Roman history, Virgil shifts suddenly to Augustus.⁴¹ The words of Anchises cut through the temporal play to resound emphatically for the reader: "Turn hither now ... Here is Caesar!" (6.788–89). The description goes on, "this in truth is he whom you so often hear promised you, Augustus Caesar, son of a god, who will again establish a golden age (*aurea condet saecula*) in Latium amid fields once ruled by Saturn" (791–94).⁴² Despite the ironic elements, even skeptical interpreters recognize that Augustan Rome is what is being celebrated in this passage.⁴³ The importance of this moment in Virgil's epic is confirmed by the similarly themed historical reviews in *Aen.* 1.262–304 and 8.624–728.⁴⁴

The *Aeneid* is set in a time of the heroes and demigods. It is not the time of the reader. And indeed the reader knows there is a considerable chronological gap between these times and their own. Is this intervening period to be taken as a kind of iron age, full of the struggles of Punic Wars and civil war? Virgil does not say, and he likewise does not set out the other ages in Hesiod's framework. But when he portrays a return to a golden age, as he writes the *Aeneid* late in his life, he no longer suggests a purely circular return to life

41 D. C. Feeney, "History and Revelation in Vergil's Underworld," *PCPS* 32 (1986):1–24, esp. 5, 7.

42 The LCL translation by Fairclough and Gould renders the plural "golden ages" in Latin singular in English.

43 Feeney, "History and Revelation," 15–16.

44 Philip Hardie, *Virgil's Aeneid: Cosmos and Imperium* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1986), 339, 362. Even O'Hara, who argues that prophecy elsewhere in the *Aeneid* is ambiguous and untrustworthy, suggests readers are to trust the *ekphrasis* of Aeneas's shield in Book 8, because it removes ambiguity caused by characters' misunderstandings—here the prophecy comes directly from Vulcan to the reader (James J. O'Hara, *Death and the Optimistic Prophecy in Vergil's Aeneid* [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990], 173). I would also note, contra O'Hara, that the fact that this prophecy is in keeping with the others across the epic challenges the notion of untrustworthy prophecy in the *Aeneid*, even if characters sometimes fail to understand the prophecies.

under Saturn, but a revised age under Jupiter. This golden age is hard won. It is perhaps exemplified by the ending of the epic, in which Aeneas hesitates, but then kills his rival Turnus, and through bloodshed figuratively founds Rome (12.939–53). There is much still to unfold from that literary moment until the historical time of the reader. But the reader knows these intervening things have since taken place—“Now!” is the time of Caesar Augustus (6.788), and the *imperium sine fine* Jupiter foretold he would bring about (1.279).

Thus, Virgil’s is a very different picture from the bleak moment with which Hesiod concludes his myth of generations, deep within the vice and impiety of the iron generation and supplying only ambiguous hints about whether decline is inevitable, or some further period “after” this generation may yet appear. By contrast, Ovid takes pessimism to new levels, while still perhaps responding to the type of triumphalism found in Virgil.

2.2.2 Ironic Succession in Ovid

Ovid also writes during the Augustan period, and in his fifteen-book Latin epic, the *Metamorphoses*, draws on the four ages of gold, silver, bronze, and iron.⁴⁵ His model does not incorporate the heroes generation like Hesiod, and nor does he identify his own present time within any particular period in the scheme.

In *Metam.* 1.89–150, Ovid uses the paradigm to set out primeval periods which are all over and done with before the bulk of his story. Again the four periods explain aspects of the human condition. They set out decline over successive periods. In the age of gold under Saturn, laws are not required but humans live in peace, accessing the land’s fecund provisions without need for any labor in a constant spring-time. But with the silver age—again, worse than the golden age—Jupiter’s reign begins. Here seasons are introduced and the people must find housing and farm for food. With the bronze age comes cruelty and hasty recourse to violence, but iron is the worst age which now adds impiety to the list of grievances. The result is bloodshed and misuse of the earth’s resources, with reference also to a tradition about giants.⁴⁶ The decline ultimately prompts the gods, called together by Jupiter, to bring all of the humans to an end with a flood, which draws the iron age to a close (1.177–347). These antediluvian stories also reflect a different involvement of the gods in human life. From the flood onwards the gods are conspicuously absent or mentioned primarily for their petty conduct (cf. 1.166, 588–600).

45 For a more detailed discussion of the ways that Ovid draws on and re-presents Hesiod, see Van Noorden, *Playing Hesiod*, 216–60.

46 See discussion of this merged tradition in Van Noorden, *Playing Hesiod*, 220, 226–27.

Ovid inverts many of the themes found in Virgil's *Aeneid*.⁴⁷ The gods do not oversee things, and nor do the unfolding events lead to meaning for Ovid's audience. The four ages are all mentioned, but they are emphatically in the past; there is no sense that they might be reclaimed or reimagined. The decline does not end with the iron generation, but the epic's conclusion approaches further nihilism. The ending refers obliquely to the apotheosis of Augustus. In 15.870, Ovid states that Augustus will listen to prayers from heaven when he dies. But the reference to Augustus supports Ovid's irony. An epilogue gives the last laugh to the author himself: he alone is the one who will live on, through his text (15.871–79). Julia Dyson Hejduk notes that Ovid himself is thus presented as the unique “mortal whose triumph over the wrath of Jupiter, and over death itself, rises above the pettiness of Olympian squabbles.”⁴⁸ Only Ovid's notoriety will endure.

As Hesiod uses his five-generation paradigm to say something about his own time, Virgil and Ovid each in their own ways draw on these themes to make claims about theirs. For all their differences, Virgil and Ovid both portray the present somewhat statically, with no apparent sense that current circumstances will change. By contrast, the kingdom paradigm as it appears in Daniel 2 and 7, and texts which draw on it, is structured around claims that the present lies on the cusp of a decisive transition.

3 Five Kingdoms in the Danielic Tradition

3.1 *The Five Kingdoms in Daniel's Paradigm*

Other essays in this volume have already explored the formation and development of kingdom paradigms in Daniel 2 and 7, so I will not detail that background here. The main point of interest for this essay lies in the way in which the Danielic paradigm structures time in order to make a claim about the present time, and how this is then recalibrated by readers of Daniel—in particular, the writer of the Epistle of Barnabas.

The traditions behind Daniel's paradigm, as with Hesiod's sources discussed above, are difficult both to identify and to date. Most interpreters suggest Daniel has drawn on Persian traditions, and note the similarities in particular

47 See Julia Dyson Hejduk, “Ovid and Religion,” in *A Companion to Ovid*, ed. Peter E. Knox, BCAW (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 45–58.

48 Hejduk, “Ovid and Religion,” 52. See also E. J. Kenney, “The Metamorphoses: A Poet's Poem,” in *A Companion to Ovid*, ed. Peter E. Knox, BCAW (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 140–53, esp. 144.

with an account of a tree with branches of different metals (the fourth comprised of a mix of steel and iron) which is described to Zoroaster in the *Bahman Yasht*.⁴⁹ Despite the earlier dating of Hesiod's text, given the likely ancient Near Eastern origin of the myth, John Collins suggests the best (though tentative) explanation is that both Hesiod and Daniel drew on an earlier common tradition. Similarly, he suggests the relationship between Persian texts such as the *Bahman Yasht* and Daniel's statue is also best understood as reliance on a common source.⁵⁰

As in the myth of generations in Hesiod, Daniel's schema also has five kingdoms, despite the tendency to refer to the Danielic tradition as a four kingdom paradigm. For both Hesiod and Daniel, the present time is situated in the lowest period of the schema, the time of iron (and clay in Daniel 2, or of the worst beast in Daniel 7). But, whereas in Hesiod this is the fifth kingdom, in Daniel it is the fourth. It is only the anticipated fifth kingdom—a final, unending divine reign—that inverts the decline which has led up to the present in Daniel.⁵¹ Both Daniel 2 and 7 are presented in the form of *vaticinia ex eventu*. Daniel's interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream describes Nebuchadnezzar's reign as the gold kingdom, and Daniel's vision of strange beasts is set in the first year of King Belshazzar of Babylon (Dan 7:1). But the details of the fourth kingdom in each case enable the audience to identify the actions of Antiochus IV and their own time as this period. One of the characteristic features of this type of "prophecy," of course, is to establish credibility through correctly "predicting" the events which are already in the past from the perspective of the reader, in order to underscore the certainty of the events still to come. In doing so, Daniel 2 and 7 both allow the reader to identify the present with the nadir of the process, which assures that the vindication of the divine action to install the final regime is imminent.

The devastation in Daniel 7 comes from the violent acts of the strange beasts, which symbolize particular regimes. As discussed above, Hesiod does not identify with the vices of the iron generation. But his didactic text suggests a moralizing purpose; perhaps the reader may avert the predicted decline by altering the behavior which has become endemic during this generation. In Daniel, the writer likewise does not identify with the destructive animals, but neither does he exhort a change in the behavior of those they represent. Rather, the focus lies in the decisive divine action to bring an end to the kingdom.

49 See discussion in Collins, *Daniel*, 163.

50 See n. 9 above.

51 This is unlike the positive era of the heroes, which immediately *precedes* the destructive present generation for Hesiod.

In this way, the present is central to how time is structured in this five-kingdom paradigm: it is situated immediately prior to the events which are predicted to bring an end not only to the current destructive empire, but the whole pattern of successive destructive regimes. The powerful image is taken up by many readers and recalibrated for new times. Such adjustments already feature elsewhere in Daniel. The vision in Daniel 9 explicitly “corrects” Jeremiah’s prophecy about the number of years until Babylon’s punishment (Dan 9:2, 24–27; cf. Jer 25:11–12), allowing for both the prophecy to remain authoritative and the implementation to remain imminent.⁵² This is the same reasoning at work in the later recalibrations of Daniel’s five kingdom paradigm, whether by writers of other apocalypses such as 4 Ezra (12:11–12) and 2 Baruch (35–40), or Josephus in his affirmation of Daniel’s prophetic prowess (*Ant.* 10.277–80).⁵³ For each of these other re-interpretations, the penultimate kingdom has become Rome.

By employing this symbolic machinery, the later writers are able to draw on Daniel’s authoritative claims, even in texts of different genres, to interpret the suffering of the present time and to point to an imminent intervention by the divine to set things right. This tradition is also taken up by the writer of the Epistle of Barnabas.

3.2 *Recalibration in the Epistle of Barnabas*

The Epistle of Barnabas is a Christian Greek text, written after the destruction of Jerusalem (cf. 16:3–4) and most likely nearer to (but not after) the time of the second revolt.⁵⁴ Despite the title attributed to it, there is consensus that it was not written by the companion of Paul. Its form as a letter is also more

52 See Laura Bizzarro, “The ‘Meaning of History’ in the Fifth Vision of 4 Ezra,” in *Interpreting 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch: International Studies*, ed. Gabriele Boccaccini and Jason M. Zurawski, LSTS 87 (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), 35–37.

53 Josephus’s *Antiquities*, 4 Ezra, and 2 Baruch are all written around the turn of the first century CE. For discussion of the use of Daniel’s paradigm in later Jewish texts, see Philip R. Davies, “Daniel in the Lion’s Den,” in *Images of Empire*, ed. Loveday Alexander, JSOTSup 122 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991), 160–78.

54 See discussions in James Carleton Paget, *The Epistle of Barnabas: Outlook and Background*, WUNT 2/64 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1994), 9–30; and Reidar Hvalvik, *The Struggle for Scripture and Covenant: The Purpose of the Epistle of Barnabas and Jewish-Christian Competition in the Second Century*, WUNT 2/82 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1996), 17–34. Each offers slightly different views, but they agree on an early second-century date, for different reasons, suggesting that the date cannot be later than approximately 130 CE. Considerable discussion about the dating of the text has been based on the interpretation of Barn. 16:3–4 (in relation to expectations that the temple will be rebuilt) and the prophecy in Barn. 4:3–5, to which I refer below.

contentious than the title implies, despite its epistolary frame in chapters 1 and 21.⁵⁵ The bulk of the text (ch. 1–17) is comprised of a series of explanations about the right interpretation of the law, relating to sacrifices, circumcision, food laws, sabbath, etc.⁵⁶ The later sections (ch. 18–20) offer a reflection on the two-ways tradition, with instruction about living on the path of light (ch. 19) and the features of the path of darkness (ch. 20).⁵⁷ Barnabas seems to have enjoyed a mixed status. It is rejected by Eusebius,⁵⁸ but the fact that it is found alongside *The Shepherd of Hermas* with the texts that would become canonical in codex Sinaiticus illustrates that it was taken as authoritative in at least some circles.⁵⁹

Barnabas is most renowned for its polemical character. Through a contrast between “us” and “Israel,” it argues that groups which practice the law have utterly misunderstood the scriptures. In particular it refutes literal interpretations of the law as they relate to key Jewish practices and advocates instead for the authenticity of an allegorical reading. The text is thus an important example of identity formation through distinguishing one’s own group from another in early Christianity. James Carleton Paget argues convincingly that these polemics arise from direct knowledge of Jewish groups and practices.⁶⁰

It is, therefore, an interesting feature of a text which presents Jewish tradition and its interpretation of the law in such a negative way that it nonetheless continues to draw on Jewish scripture to substantiate its point. This is not the

55 Even those who do not consider Barnabas’s genre to be “letter” still note the epistolary frame in chapters 1 and 21, frequently suggesting genres such as theological treatise for the material of the intervening chapters. Hvalvik, by contrast, argues that the work is a letter, and that the material included is best explained as having been reworked from lectures or sermons (Hvalvik, *The Struggle*, 81). After outlining some other arguments, Paget concludes via a comparison with Ignatius’s letters, that “Such a mixture of features finds parallels in Barn, and should warn us against too hastily adopting a non-epistolary understanding of that document’s form” (Paget, *The Epistle*, 45).

56 See discussion in Paget, *The Epistle*, 51–52. Paget also points out that the material criticizing ritual law appears at important points in the literary structure of the first major section of the text, in the beginning (ch. 2–3), middle (ch. 9–10), and end (ch. 15–16).

57 Ehrman argues that the obvious common themes with the *Didache* here are best explained by a common source rather than direct dependence in either direction (Bart D. Ehrman, *The Apostolic Fathers*, LCL 25 [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003], 2:5).

58 Barnabas is listed among the illegitimate or spurious (νόθος) works which should not be counted among the NT (*Hist. eccl.* 3.25.4). For Eusebius this is a separate category from both those which should clearly be included and those which are disputed.

59 Clement of Alexandria is the earliest source to cite Barnabas as authoritative (see Ehrman, *The Apostolic Fathers*, 2:3).

60 Paget, *The Epistle*, 52. There is some disagreement in earlier studies over whether the interlocutors Barnabas has in mind are Jesus-believers who continue to practice and advocate for the law, or Jews who are not a part of the Jesus movement.

kind of attitude, associated especially with Marcion, in which all earlier claims to revelation are disregarded, but an appropriation of earlier texts as authoritative revelation that has been consistently misinterpreted since it was first received (4:7–8) and now can be set right by the author of Barnabas. The text thus claims this heritage as its own.⁶¹ This is also a feature of how the writer presents Daniel's prophecy.

3.2.1 The Five Kingdom Paradigm in Barnabas 4

In Barnabas 4, the author applies Daniel 7 to his own setting as an authoritative prophecy, in order to claim that the present time lies on the cusp of the final events. Barnabas 4:3–5 features frequently in studies of Barnabas, as one of two passages routinely cited in debates about the text's compositional date. But the passage is not generally analyzed for what it communicates about the writer's understanding of the structuring of time.⁶² I suggest that this is an important feature of how Daniel's prophecy functions in Barnabas 4, and that it in turn illuminates other features of the text as a whole.

After the epistolary opening and introduction (ch. 1), Barnabas discusses sacrifices (ch. 2) and fasting (ch. 3). The final verse of chapter 3 reflects back on the interpretation of fasting through the lens of Isaiah 58 alluded to in Barn. 3:1–5: “And so he revealed all things to us in advance, that we not be dashed against their law as newcomers” (3:6).⁶³ Claims about special insight into the true meaning of the scriptures are an important feature across Barnabas (1:7; 5:3; 6:9–10; 9:9).⁶⁴ Here the ending of chapter 3 also sets up the writer's claims to true knowledge of the meaning of Daniel's earlier prophecy in the section which follows (3:3–5).

Warning and a sense of eschatological seriousness continue throughout Barnabas 4, and it is in this context that the writer cites Daniel 7. The prophecy allows the writer to set the present time within the context of a wider paradigm, counting time towards the present. After a reference to Enoch in 4:3

61 Paget describes this as “radically conservative” (Paget, *The Epistle*, 52).

62 Ferguson is a helpful exception, treating Barnabas 4 within his broader discussion of possible millenarianism in Barnabas (Everett Ferguson, “Was Barnabas a Chiliast? An Example of Hellenistic Number Symbolism in Barnabas and Clement of Alexandria,” in *Greeks, Romans, and Christians: Essays in Honor of Abraham J. Malherbe*, ed. Balch, Ferguson, and Meeks [Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990], 157–67). The importance of eschatology in Barnabas is also confirmed by the discussion of the thousand-year sabbath as Barnabas's non-literal interpretation of laws about sabbath in ch. 15.

63 A textual variant slightly changes this, whether “newcomers” (ἐπὶ λυτοί) as in Sinaiticus, or “proselytes” (προσῆλυτοί) as in Codex Hierosolymitanus (11th century) and the Latin translation.

64 See discussion in Ehrman, *The Apostolic Fathers*, 2:4.

(which is not clear),⁶⁵ the writer includes two citations of Daniel 7, though the first is attributed to “the prophet” and it is not until the second that attribution to Daniel is made. The first comes from the explanation of the ten horns in Dan 7:24: “Ten kingdoms will rule the earth and a small king will rise up afterwards; he will humble three of the kings at one time” (4:4).⁶⁶ The second is from the description of the vision itself, in Dan 7:8, and sets the prophecy within the five-kingdom paradigm: “I saw the fourth beast, wicked and strong, and worse than all the beasts of the seas, and I saw how ten horns rose up from him, and from them a small horn as an offshoot; and I saw how he humbled three of the great horns at one time” (4:5).

As in other uses of the paradigm discussed above, Barnabas shows the decline of the fourth kingdom as “worse” than all the previous and, as in Daniel, it supplies the further details which might enable the audience to identify their own time. There are minimal changes to the details in Daniel, though the text does not follow the exact wording of any known Greek version.⁶⁷ This causes difficulties for contemporary scholars’ attempts to date the text by aligning the “little horn” with historical events.⁶⁸ However, it seems, the writer does not

65 It is not clear whether the reference to Enoch relates to the preceding statement about the final stumbling block, or acts as an introductory formula for the verse which follows about cutting short the time. Rhodes notes that, either way, scholars have been unable to agree on any particular Enochic passage to explain the reference (James N. Rhodes, *The Epistle of Barnabas and the Deuteronomic Tradition: Polemics, Paraenesis, and the Legacy of the Golden-Calf Incident*, WUNT 2/188 [Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004], 47 n. 42).

66 Note the discussion of textual differences between “kings” or “kingdoms” here, and in manuscripts of Daniel 7, in Rhodes, *The Epistle*, 48. The difference between the vision and its explanation may also explain the different attributions to “the prophet” and to Daniel.

67 Paget, *The Epistle*, 10. The key differences lie in Barnabas’s description of the little horn as an “offshoot” and the destruction of the three horns “at the same time” (Paget, *The Epistle*, 11).

68 See extensive discussion of options in Hvalvik, *The Struggle*, 27–32; Paget, *The Epistle*, 9–17; Rhodes, *The Epistle*, 47–52. The historical situation which seems closest to the description of both the number of horns and the simultaneous humbling of three is the time of Vespasian and the three emperors who each reigned in turn within the same year (69 CE, almost “at once”). However, most agree Vespasian’s reign is too early for the writing. Hvalvik sidesteps the issue by claiming this is the historical situation to which the application of the prophecy referred in the text which Barnabas used as a source (Hvalvik, *The Struggle*, 26–28). Others note possible later constellations of emperors who might fit the three (e.g., leading to seeing Nerva as the “little horn” currently in power). And many theories exist for counting the ten or eleven horns, depending on whether the little horn, as an “offshoot”, is to be counted also as one of the ten, or an eleventh. See discussion in Rhodes about reading the fourth beast positively from the perspective of the destruction of Jerusalem, with Barn. 16:3–4 as further support. Rhodes is rightly skeptical about such a radical divergence in use of Daniel 7 from other receptions of this

expect any such difficulty for the reader, or he considers a formulaic statement sufficient to make them realize this is their time. Immediately following the citation, the assertion follows: “And so you should understand (Συνιέναι οὖν ὀφείλετε)” (v. 6).⁶⁹ As the chapter moves immediately back into a didactic, hortatory mode, it suggests there is something important in this prophecy for the audience in their particular time.

3.2.2 The νῦν καιρός in the Context of the Five Kingdom Paradigm in Barnabas 4

The application of Daniel in Barnabas 4 is part of a wider emphasis on the present time in the context of an eschatological framework. In 1:7, the writer asserts that earlier prophecy reveals both the past and the reader’s present, as well as an insight into the future: “For through the prophets the Master has made known to us what has happened and what now is; and he has given us the first fruits of the taste of what is yet to be.” The text goes on to emphasize the accuracy of prophecy which the readers can now see has been fulfilled in the past, before claiming further special insight which will enable the writer to reveal more that “will gladden your hearts in the present circumstances” (1:8).

Chapter 4 offers numerous references to the present time. It opens with exhortation about attending to the features of the present age with an eye to eschatological matters, leading to the assertion, “And we should hate the error of the present age, that we may be loved in the age to come (καὶ μισήσωμεν τὴν πλάνην τοῦ νῦν καιροῦ, ἵνα εἰς τὸν μέλλοντα ἀγαπηθῶμεν)” (4:1). The character of the present time is dark; it is a time of lawlessness (4:1, 9). But it is also set in relation to other eschatological events. Though the language might be more cryptic than Hesiod’s explicit identification of the present time in his framework, the writer of Barnabas does situate his reader. Having already claimed a taste of the first fruits of the eschaton (1:7), just before introducing Daniel’s prophecy in chapter 4 he asserts: “the final stumbling block (τὸ τέλειον σκάνδαλον) is at hand” (4:3). After citing Daniel, and offering a further warning related to what he claims is the mistaken interpretation of the law and Jewish claim to the covenant, he exhorts that:

text, given the brief reference and lack of further evidence of this reading in Barnabas 4 (Rhodes, *The Epistle*, 51).

69 There is a textual difficulty in 4:6b, which affects interpretations about the covenant and Jewish and Christian relations, but is less relevant to the questions central to the current essay. See the argument in Rhodes, *The Epistle*, 24–28.

Therefore, we should pay close attention in the final days (Διὸ προσέχωμεν ἐν ταῖς ἐσχάταις ἡμέραις).⁷⁰ For the entire time of our faith will be of no use to us if we do not stand in resistance, as is fitting for the children of God, both against this present lawless age and against the stumbling blocks that are yet to come, that the Black One not sneak in among us (4:9–10).

That the final stumbling block is “at hand” (ἤγγικεν) (4:3) and yet further stumbling blocks are yet to come (4:9) may suggest some incoherence. However, both verses indicate an eschatological consciousness and, whether the difficulties anticipated imminently are akin to messianic woes or simply the suffering of the fourth and “worse” kingdom (cf. 4:5), they remain precursors to the anticipated end. In 4:9 the reader is exhorted to resistance in both “this present lawless age” and “against the stumbling blocks to come” which perhaps suggests the stumbling blocks are expected as final events after the present moment. If they relate to the final stumbling block of 4:3 then it is clear that all of this involves a sense of urgency; not only is this final σκάνδαλον already near, but the verse goes on to explain that because of this “the Master shortened the seasons and days (τοὺς καιροὺς καὶ τὰς ἡμέρας), that his beloved may hurry and arrive at their inheritance” (4:3).⁷¹ The idea of divine oversight of historical progress, causing further acceleration towards the end, is found in apocalypses, such as 2 Bar 20:1–2. That this claim in Barnabas 4 introduces the prophecy from Daniel confirms its eschatological urgency.

Helpful readings of this text may, therefore, not require identification of a particular historical event as the final stumbling block, whether or not the writer had one in mind, but to recognize the eschatological character and emphasis on the nearness of the culmination from the perspective of the (difficult) present. Similarly this may be the best approach to the details about ten or eleven horns. James Rhodes rightly observes “apocalyptic ‘code’ is notoriously open to reinterpretation by later readers, whether ancient or modern; hence, even if we knew Barnabas’s intention beyond doubt, there is no guarantee that his

70 In the LCL edition, Ehrman translates “here in the final days” (4:9), but the term for “here” is not in the Greek. Although it is possible to make a case that this is in keeping with the writer’s eschatological outlook, it is not clear that he does believe he already lives among the last days.

71 Ehrman’s LCL translation, modified for gender inclusive language. The καιροί here could, of course, refer to temporal periods rather than seasons of the year, as is common in Jewish and early Christian literature, including Daniel 2 and 4. See Kylie Crabbe, *Luke/Acts and the End of History*, BZNW 238 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2019), 118–23.

reading of the text would not strike us as contrived.”⁷² This is the case for many recalibrations of the paradigm as it is applied to new historical circumstances. This does not mean that the writer did not expect the audience to make some connection between current events and those in the paradigm as applied. The direct address in Barn. 4:6 suggests that is exactly what is expected, even if only through the generic phrasing.

After addressing the reader in this way, the writer moves from prophecy immediately into paraenesis, which contains plenty of polemic. As in the texts discussed above it is helpful to consider where the writer positions themselves (and the audience) in relation to the current, fourth kingdom. The terrible circumstances of the present time and its stumbling blocks, whatever historical analogue might be implied, are not caused by events with which the writer identifies, though they affect him. They are most likely identified with the actions of the empire itself. But the tone of eschatological seriousness lends severity to the consequences of choices that are made during this difficult time. The sins that are “piling up” are not in the first instance those of the Christian audience but the opposing groups described with anti-Jewish rhetoric. Nonetheless, the implied audience risks the consequences of such sin if they choose to claim the covenant is “both ours and theirs”, thus aligning themselves with the accumulating sinfulness of the opposing groups.

By making use of the resources offered by the authoritative text, recalibrated for a new time, the writer emphasizes the eschatological tension in the present. Perhaps surprisingly, he does not cite the end of the paradigm and the divine reign, which dominates a large portion of the text in Daniel 7. The brief reference to only Daniel’s “fourth beast” alongside the interpretation of ten kingdoms suggests that the reader was likely to be familiar with the rest of the paradigm, but Barnabas leaves that unmentioned. Emphasis remains on the present, but with enough hints about the future to confirm a larger framework in which the present is found. A conclusion that Barnabas primarily indicates a general sense of “soon” with this paradigm may seem to undermine the importance of his eschatological claims. However, I suggest it shows a key element of what the paradigm offers: an insight into the structuring of time. It supplies the dual sense of the need for change and the promise that this is imminent, recalibrated from the earlier tradition. This enables the authoritative text to support a constant anticipation that the end is imminent no matter how much time has come before, confirming the call to resistance and endurance (4:9–10).

72 Rhodes, *The Epistle*, 49.

4 Conclusion

In each text discussed here, the paradigm of four (or five) kingdoms/generations facilitates something important in how the writer communicates the structuring of time. In particular, it enables the writer to say something about the present time by relating it to a wider pattern. The past periods provide the broader context, which can even be reduced to simply a reference to the “fourth” period with an explicit cross-reference to a source text while the other periods are presumed (Barn. 4:5; cf. 4 Ezra 12:11). For texts like Daniel and those which draw on it, having established this broader pattern, the key focus lies on the provisional character of the present time. Even as the present time is recalibrated for a new audience, the writer stresses the relationship between the (dire) present and the imminent end to be brought about by the fifth, divine empire.

Also in Hesiod, the present time offers a hint of provisionality. Here it arises through confidence sparked by the *past*—the generation of heroes shows that decline is not necessarily inevitable—and the ambiguity introduced by the cryptic comment about wishing to be born before or after the current time.⁷³ This ambiguity queries what the reader should expect next. In Hesiod the present time is characterized by vice and impiety that Hesiod disdains. But whether some change in circumstance might be possible, as hinted, depends on whether the prophecy for the remainder of the iron age must inevitably unfold.

In each of these examples, the present time is identified with the low-point of the paradigm of successive periods. But some ancient writers who draw on Hesiod’s myth of generations rework the present time differently. In a helpful study of politics and temporality in ancient texts, Collins argues that “apocalyptic dissenters” and “imperial propagandists” hold essentially the same understanding of the structure of history, but that they differ in how they situate the present time.⁷⁴ He contrasts those who portray the end of history as having been realized already in the present (a view which he terms “ideology”) with those who continue to anticipate the end beyond current political structures (“utopia”),⁷⁵ arguing that this distinction reflects the essential difference in how these groups structure time. The contrast similarly highlights an important

73 See n. 26 above on Stuckenbruck’s argument about ways that past events provide assurance for the future in Jewish and Christian texts.

74 John J. Collins, “Temporality and Politics in Jewish Apocalyptic Literature,” in *Apocalyptic in History and Tradition*, ed. Rowland and Barton, JSPSup 43 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2002), 42.

75 Collins uses Karl’s Mannheim’s distinction between “ideology” and “utopia” respectively to illustrate this distinction (Collins, “Temporality and Politics,” 28).

distinction in how the paradigm functions in texts which build on the ambiguity left at the conclusion of Hesiod's myth.

In Virgil's account of the present time, the end and goal of a golden age has already been achieved under Augustus. This is not only a reworking of Hesiod's paradigm away from the golden generation under Cronos to reimagining a golden age under Jupiter, but it also involves repositioning the present time. The present is not located in struggle (as in those texts which identify the present with an age of iron), and as a result, it is also not about any further anticipated change. It is static, like the "ideology" of Collins's model. Ovid's bleak picture is rather different; all the four ages are well in the past. But the present time is also static. It approaches nihilism, distancing the present from the mythological times represented by the four ages but offering no further meaning or hint of future change.

How each of these texts implies the reader ought to respond reflects further differences in their applications of the paradigm—from Hesiod's assessment of the current generation and its future (reworked into Virgil's confidence in imperial circumstances and Ovid's nihilistic trajectory), to Barnabas's adaptation of Daniel's quietism (manifest in awaiting divine action) into an exhortation to certain theological and ethical positions during this crucial time before the end. But, in each case, the present time is central to how they appropriate the paradigm. The four/five-period schema allows the writers to play with broad sweeps of time. But the pattern it offers is a way of addressing the present, constantly recalibrated, but always "now."

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The Four Kingdoms of Daniel in Hippolytus's *Commentary on Daniel*

Katharina Bracht

1 Introduction*

In Hippolytus's *Commentary on Daniel* (composed in Rome, 204 CE),¹ the motif of the four kingdoms of Daniel 2 and Daniel 7–8 plays a prominent role. In connection with this motif, the author develops a concept of the chronological sequence of historical events in time and at the end time, which bears interpretive fruit in different ways.² This intense interest in time and the end time seems at first to be surprising, since Hippolytus repeatedly speaks out against calculations of the events of the end time because such things are

* I express my gratitude to Jacob Cerone who translated this essay into English. English quotes from Hippolytus's *Commentary on Daniel* are based on the English translation by T. C. Schmidt (Hippolytus of Rome, *Commentary on Daniel and 'Chronicon,'* ed. and trans. T. C. Schmidt with Contributions by Nick Nicholas, GSECP 67 [Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2017]), but modified when necessary. Biblical quotations refer to NRSV, quotations from LXX or Theodotion to NETS.

- 1 Although Pierre Nautin's investigation *Hippolyte et Josipe: Contribution à l'histoire de la littérature chrétienne du troisième siècle*, ETHDT 1 (Paris: Cerf, 1947) in the 19th century called into question the unity of the body of writings attributed to Hippolytus and the identity of its author, in more recent research a consensus with respect to the so-called Hippolytus question has emerged, which concludes that the author of the biblical commentaries (see the list of the twelve commentaries by Hippolytus in Charles Kannengiesser, *Handbook of Patristic Exegesis: The Bible in Ancient Christianity*, 2 vols. [Leiden: Brill, 2004], 1:528–35, here 529–532) is identical with the author of the writings *De Christo et antichristo* and *Contra Noëtum*. On this see Katharina Bracht, *Hippolyts Schrift In Danielem: Kommunikative Strategien eines frühchristlichen Kommentars*, STAC 85 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), 28, 400, which also counts the additional writings *Contra Gaium*, *Chronicon*, and the *Easter Table*; Enrico Norelli, "Hippolyte et le corpus Hippolytéen," in *Histoire de la littérature grecque chrétienne des origines à 451: De Clément d'Alexandrie à Eusèbe de Césarée* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2017), 3:415–482, here 3:415–435, 3:461–477. Further attributions of writings beyond this core inventory are controversial. For dating and localization, see Bracht, *Hippolyts Schrift*, 50–68, 398–401; Katharina Bracht, "Einleitung," in *Hippolyt von Rom: Danielkommentar*, ed. and trans. Katharina Bracht, BGL 80 (Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann, 2016), VII–LX, here XIVf.
- 2 In addition to time and end time, Hippolytus uses two further conceptions of time that are not relevant for the present discussion: a chiliastic model of time (*Dan.* IV.22–24) and a detailed end-time calculation in his interpretation of the 70 weeks of years from Jer^{LXX} 25:11 / DanTh 9 (*Dan.* IV.28–35). On this, see Bracht, *Hippolyts Schrift*, 312–333; 347–349, 365–368.

expressions of unbelief (*Dan.* IV.5.6) and are expressions of unseemly impatience (*Dan.* IV.15.1; IV.22.1–4). In this essay, I explore this contradiction and illuminate it in light of the character of the work as a whole. Towards this goal, Hippolytus's *Commentary on Daniel* will be presented first, and then his interpretations of Daniel's concept of four world eras will be presented in the context of the entire work.

2 Hippolytus's *Commentary on Daniel*

2.1 *The Challenges of the Exegesis of Daniel around 200 CE*

Hippolytus's *Commentary on Daniel* is considered to be the oldest, completely preserved interpretation of a biblical text by a Christian author. The subject of the commentary is the biblical book of Daniel in Theodotion's Greek translation. The structure of the *Commentary on Daniel* follows the arrangement of its pretext such that the specific structure of DanTh—which places the Susanna narrative in front of the Aramaic-Hebrew book of Daniel and which inserts the extensive prayers of Azariah and the three youths in the fiery furnace (DanTh 3:24–90)—is mirrored in Hippolytus's *Commentary on Daniel*. The commenting is carried out in a recurring sequence of lemmas from the pretext, which often consist of several verses of DanielTh, followed by comments. Only the stories of Daniel and Bel, as well as Daniel and the dragon (BelDrTh), are left curiously without comment by Hippolytus, even though they were known to him.³

In his cursory commentary on the book of Daniel, Hippolytus takes up the theme of the four kingdoms where he treats the relevant chapter of the book of Daniel. Accordingly, his discussion on this theme occurs in two places within the *Commentary on Daniel*, that is, in two different contexts. The first occurrence is in the second book of the commentary, which interprets Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the statue (DanTh 2) and—irrelevant for the present discussion—the story of the three young men in the fiery furnace (DanTh 3) (*Dan.* 11.1–13 on DanTh 2). The second discussion occurs in the fourth book of the commentary, which provides commentary on Daniel's visions (DanTh 7–12) (*Dan.* IV.1–27 on DanTh 7–8).

But why does Hippolytus endeavor to make any comment at all here? Let us recall how great the temporal distance between the contemporary reader of the biblical book of Daniel (ca. 200 CE) is from the time when the book came into existence. Modern historical-critical research dates the final redaction of

³ See, for example, *Dan.* 11.26.1–3; 11.35.2.

the Aramaic-Hebrew book of Daniel between 170 and 160 BCE,⁴ the origin of the Theodotion edition to the turn of the era⁵ or to the 1st century CE,⁶ and the origin of the Theodotion narrative of Susanna to the first quarter of the 1st century CE.⁷ This means that the actual temporal distance between Hippolytus's pretext and his present time was between ca. 370 years (Dan^{Aram-Hebr}) or ca. 200 years (DanTh) and ca. 175 years (SusTh). According to Hippolytus's own calculation, this distance might have even been about 687 years because he dates the visions and the prophecies of Daniel to the time of the Babylonian exile.⁸ Hippolytus emphasizes the great temporal distance between the pretext which he interprets and his own time repeatedly through the terminological pairing of "then—now."⁹ Jan Assmann has plausibly explained the challenges that the antiquity of such a canonical text poses for later readers: the "stretching of the communicative situation" ("Zerdehnung der Kommunikationssituation")¹⁰ as he called it, must be overcome. This phenomenon occurs because the author's message, which was originally addressed to a contemporary readership, is "preserved" in a canonical text and in this way reaches readers along the way, not as if in a conversation, but at a temporal distance of often more than several hundred years. In our case, this means that

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- 4 See Klaus Koch, "Das aramäisch-hebräische Danielbuch: Konfrontation zwischen Weltmacht und monotheistischer Religionsgemeinschaft in universalgeschichtlicher Perspektive," in *Die Geschichte der Danielauslegung in Judentum, Christentum und Islam: Studien zur Kommentierung des Danielbuches in Literatur und Kunst*, ed. Katharina Bracht and David S. du Toit, BZAW 371 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2007), 3–27, here 3.
- 5 See Helmut Engel, *Die Susanna-Erzählung: Einleitung, Übersetzung und Kommentar zum Septuaginta-Text und zur Theodotion-Bearbeitung*, OBO 61 (Freiburg [Schweiz]: Universitätsverlag; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1985), 57.
- 6 See Alexander A. Di Lella, "Introduction," in *The Book of Daniel*, ed. Louis F. Hartman and Alexander A. Di Lella, AB 23 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday 1978), 3–110, here 82. For a brief overview of the history of research on the dating of DanTh, see Bracht, *Hippolytus Schrift*, 35–38.
- 7 See Engel, *Die Susanna-Erzählung*, 41.
- 8 According to Hipp. *Dan.* IV.30.4–6; 31.1, 69 weeks or 483 years lie between Daniel's appearance in Babylon and Christ's birth (historically, this is not correct, of course, because according to the current state of research, the first deportation took place in the year 597 BCE). This includes the 204 years that, according to the dating of the *Commentary on Daniel* above, have elapsed since then until the formation of the writing.
- 9 Πάλαι / τότε—νῦν: Proof and discussion of the passages are in Bracht, *Hippolytus Schrift*, 70–75.
- 10 Jan Assmann, "Text und Kommentar. Einführung," in *Text und Kommentar, Archäologie der literarischen Kommunikation IV*, ed. Jan Assmann and Burkhard Gladigow (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1995), 9–33, here 21–23. In this essay, Assmann explains the emergence of commentary literature in general. With regard to Hippolytus's *Commentary on Daniel*, see Bracht, *Hippolytus Schrift*, 7–9.

the biblical book of Daniel was no longer easily understandable to Christians in Rome around 200 CE due to the changes in the religious perspective (it was written as early Jewish scripture, but read by Christians), in the applicable value system, and in the plausibility structures that had occurred in the meantime. Nevertheless, they expected that the canonical text was relevant, indeed authoritative, for their group identity and the associated structural norms. The discrepancy between expectations on the one hand and a lack of understanding on the other was the problem for which Hippolytus sought a solution. Obviously, he considered a continuation or an adaptation of the wording to the new circumstances as impossible because of the authority he ascribed to the biblical book of Daniel.¹¹ Therefore, Hippolytus looked for another way and chose an explanatory procedure: the lemma-commentary method.

Like many other ancient commentaries, Hippolytus's *Commentary on Daniel* presumably had its own *Sitz im Leben* within the context of Christian education. Hippolytus describes his approach to commenting, which he often designs as diatribe,¹² as "exposition" (ἀπόδειξις; *Dan.* 1.2.1), or as "investigation" (ζήτημα; *Dan.* 11.11.1). He addresses his readers as "those who love learning" (*Dan.* 1.7.2; 18.1) and "lovers of truth" (*Dan.* 11.11.2), and occasionally intersperses methodological-hermeneutical remarks in which he demands that the biblical scriptures be read not superficially "passing over" them but "with understanding" (*Dan.* 1.2.1; 7.2; 11.11.1f.). Hippolytus attributes theological errors and false doctrines to the lack of careful or even complete study of scripture, as well as to the lack of education (ἀπαιδευσία), and folly (μωρία; *Dan.* 1V.18.2–4; 19.1; cf. 1V.20.1). Presumably, the work is the manuscript of the teacher, which he formulated in writing before the lecture.¹³ Despite all the demands for scholarly

11 Hippolytus clearly proceeded from the principle of the "closed" nature of his pretext, i.e., from its unchangeability because of its canonicity. In a situation in which the Christian communities in Rome were debating which of the circulating Greek versions of the book of Daniel was to be regarded as canonical—the Septuagint version, the Theodotion version, or a possible third, independent version as used by Justin—he took a clear position by using the lemmata of DanTh, thereby also establishing a common textual basis for teachers and students (see Bracht, *Hippolyts Schrift*, 155). In a canonical-historical regard, therefore, Hippolytus's *Commentary on Daniel* is an important point along the path that led to establishing DanTh as opposed to Dan^{LXX} within the purview of Christian churches (see Bracht, *Hippolyts Schrift*, 42–50).

12 The author repeatedly addresses the reader directly, often using the inclusive "we," allowing a fictitious interlocutor to anticipate a possible objection, formulating rhetorical or real questions, referring to what has already been said, sometimes allowing the train of thought to progress through associated connections and sometimes digressing thematically. On this, see Bracht, *Hippolyts Schrift*, 96–127.

13 Thus, individual passages composed very carefully, which do not correspond to a student's lecture notes, can be explained in this way. On this, see for example Hipp. *Dan.* 1.15.6–16.1;

integrity and meticulousness, the focus is on the orientation of the church. Classical elements of education are missing, such that it can be assumed that Hippolytus wrote his *Commentary on Daniel* for classes in a Christian philosophical school taught at a popular philosophical level.¹⁴ Among his listeners and readers were not only men, but also explicitly women (*Dan.* 1.23.2; 25.4), which was unusual in comparison to contemporary pagan¹⁵ or rabbinic Jewish educational institutions.¹⁶

2.2 *Background: Hippolytus's Communicative Strategies in His Commentary on Daniel*

In order to overcome the so-called “stretching of the communicative situation” (“Zerdehnung der Kommunikationssituation”) and to update the old biblical pretext for the contemporary readership, especially his students, Hippolytus uses various communicative strategies. In this essay I shall demonstrate how he uses the schema of four world eras with an eschatological end phase, which he takes from Daniel 2 and Daniel 7–8, in order to develop perspectives for the future and for the end time. In this way, he addresses the problem of an imminent expectation of the end that is currently arising in his congregation.¹⁷ Furthermore, with the help of a christological argument, Hippolytus presents a continuity spanning the world empires from “then” to “now.” He sees this continuity guaranteed by Christ’s unbroken, at all times uniform work, who has been active as “fleshless Logos” (λόγος ἄσαρκος) since the creation of the world, who assisted the three young men in the fiery furnace in Babylon (*Dan.* 11.30.3), who was also active in Daniel’s day (*Dan.* 1.23.2),¹⁸ and who now, since Christ’s birth, that is, at the time of the Roman Empire, has been active as the “incarnated Logos” (λόγος ἔνσαρκος; *Dan.* 11.33.5).¹⁹

For the sake of completeness, additional communicative strategies should be mentioned here to show, with a view to the entire commentary, that the

1.16.2–5 with the analysis in Bracht, *Hippolyts Schrift*, 177–81; see also Bracht, “Einleitung,” xviii.

14 See Bracht, *Hippolyts Schrift*, 155–57.

15 In the Roman school system of the second century, girls of wealthy parents were able to attend elementary and grammar school. On this, see Henri Irénée Marrou, *Geschichte der Erziehung im klassischen Altertum* (Freiburg; Munich: Alber, 1957), 391, 401.

16 See Friedrich Avemarie, “Jüdische Schriftgelehrsamkeit,” in *Neues Testament und antike Kultur: Familie—Gesellschaft—Wirtschaft*, ed. Kurt Erlemann, Karl Leo Noethlichs, Klaus Scherberich, and Jürgen Zangenberg (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2005), 2:244–248, here 2:245.

17 See Bracht, *Hippolyts Schrift*, 300–12.

18 See Bracht, *Hippolyts Schrift*, 279–87, esp. 285.

19 See Bracht, *Hippolyts Schrift*, 286.

theme of the four kingdoms represents only one aspect of Hippolytus's exegesis of Daniel. Hippolytus also updates the Susanna narrative by interpreting the situation of his congregation with the help of its interpretation. For this purpose, he points to an analogous situation between Susanna, who is persecuted and harassed by the two elders in order to seduce her to infidelity to her husband Joachim, and the persecution of the congregation, which is harassed both by the Roman state and by "the Jews" and is seduced to infidelity to Christ.²⁰ Furthermore, following passages from the biblical book of Daniel, he reflects on ethical questions that were apparently of current importance to his community. Above all, he considers intensely the relationship to the state authorities (*Dan.* III on DanTh 4–6) in order to obtain corresponding behavioral norms.²¹ In addition to this, by means of a historical-paradigmatic interpretation of various episodes of the book of Daniel (Susanna; DanTh 3: the three young men in the fiery furnace; DanTh 6: Daniel in the lion's den), he obtains role models for his readers in their special situation as a troubled congregation.²² Hippolytus is able to make this argument on the basis of his hermeneutical presuppositions that the book of Daniel, like the entirety of Holy Scripture, should be understood historically and that it was written to admonish its readers. Finally, Hippolytus is also familiar with the typological-allegorical method of interpretation. An excursus on the Paradise narrative according to Gen^{LXX} 2:8–10; 3 (*Dan.* I.18), which Hippolytus interprets in order to assure his congregation of its identity as the church,²³ turns into a masterpiece of typological-allegorical interpretation.

3 The Four Kingdoms of Daniel in the Context of the *Commentary on Daniel*

3.1 *Hippolytus's Concept of Time and the End Time*

In the background of Hippolytus's remarks stands a consistent concept of time and the end time, which he sketches with his interpretation of Daniel. This concept of time and end time will be reproduced here first before proceeding further.

20 See Bracht, *Hippolytus Schrift*, 166–95.

21 See Bracht, *Hippolytus Schrift*, 260–78. Cf. also the reflection on the second repentance in the context of an excursus on the Paradise narrative (*Dan.* I.18.11 on Gen^{LXX} 9; see Bracht, *Hippolytus Schrift*, 214–21).

22 See Bracht, *Hippolytus Schrift*, 222–60.

23 See Bracht, *Hippolytus Schrift*, 198–22.

Hippolytus draws a parallel relationship between the meaning of the four animals from Daniel 7–8 and the parts of the statue from Daniel 2 (*Dan.* 1V.7.2–6). The hermeneutic key of his interpretation lies in a typological understanding of the passage: Hippolytus assumes that both the statue from Daniel 2, which was shown to Nebuchadnezzar, represents a “typological prediction of the kingdom of the whole world” (ἡ γὰρ εἰκὼν ἡ ... δειχθεῖσα τῷ Ναβουχοδονόσορ τὸν τύπον περιεῖχεν τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ παντὸς κόσμου; *Hipp. Dan.* 11.12.2) as well as the animals “in a model and image portray the kingdoms” (ἐν τύπῳ καὶ εἰκόνι δείκνυσιν τὰς ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ τοῦτῳ ἐπαναστάσας βασιλείας; *Dan.* 1V.2.1).²⁴

Daniel’s four world eras consist of the kingdoms of Babylon, Media, Persia, and Greece, with the later decay of the Diadochian kingdoms which flows into God’s eschatological kingdom.²⁵ Hippolytus is faced with the challenge that the contemporary world empire, that is, the Roman Empire, does not appear within the sequence of kingdoms which the editor of the book of Daniel had in view—on the basis of modern, historical-critical exegesis we know that the Roman Empire could not have been in view because the final redaction of

24 Hippolytus’s negative understanding of secular rule, according to which all these kingdoms destroy humanity like animals (ὥσπερ θηρία διαφθείροντα τὴν ἀνθρωπότητα; *Dan.* 1V.2.1), is itself striking.

25 In the biblical book of Daniel, the sequence of the kingdoms begins with Babylon, which is symbolized by the golden head of the statue (*Dan*Th 2:32; interpreted as Nebuchadnezzar in *Dan*Th 2:38) and by the lioness of the vision of animals (*Dan*Th 7:4; interpreted as the first of the four kingdoms in *Dan*Th 7:17). The second kingdom is Media, which is symbolized by the silver breast of the statue (*Dan*Th 2:32; interpreted as Media under the rule of Darius in *Dan*Th 5:30f.) and the bear with the three ribs (*Dan*Th 7:5; with its interpretation in *Dan*Th 9:1). The bronze belly and thighs of the statue (*Dan*Th 2:32) and the third beast, the panther with four wings and four heads (*Dan*Th 7:6), stand for Persia (*Dan*Th 10:1). The fourth, chronologically the most recent kingdom in the biblical book of Daniel is Greece, or the kingdom of Alexander the Great, symbolized by the iron lower legs of the statue (*Dan*Th 2:33; interpreted as the fourth, exceedingly strong kingdom in *Dan*Th 2:40) and the fearsome beast with eleven horns (*Dan*Th 7:7; Greece as the kingdom that follows after Persia in *Dan*Th 10:20). The disintegration of the kingdom of Alexander the Great into the Diadochian kingdoms is expressed in the biblical book of Daniel by the various materials used for the feet of the statue, which are partly made of iron and partly made of clay (*Dan*Th 2:33; cf. 2:42f.) as well as by ten of the horns of the fearsome beast (*Dan*Th 7:7; cf. *Dan*Th 7:24; as well as *Dan*Th 8:22 in connection with the third partial parallel vision). The eleventh, small horn, for which there is no parallel in the vision of the statue in *Dan*Th 2, stands for the subsequent king who wages war against the saints, deprives them of power, and blasphemes God (*Dan*Th 7:21; 24f.)—the reference here, without being explicitly named, is Antiochus Epiphanes IV. After this, the eschatological future begins in the book of Daniel: the eternal kingdom of God (*Dan*Th 2:44f.), which is illustrated with the stone that is cut off from a mountain without any action by hands (*Dan*Th 2:34; interpreted in 2:44) and destroys the statue or illustrated with the one who comes “like the Son of Man” and receives authority and kingship from the “ancient of days” (*Dan*Th 7:13f.).

the book of Daniel took place at the time of Antiochus Epiphanes IV, around 164 BCE. Hippolytus must, therefore, modify the intended meaning within the book of Daniel in order to adapt the statement to his contemporary circumstances. Probably in connection with the interpretations that emerged within Jewish and Christian spheres at the end of the 1st century CE,²⁶ he substitutes Media as the second member with Persia, and puts Greece in the third position. By making this alteration, the fourth position is now free and can be occupied by the Roman Empire.²⁷ For Hippolytus, Daniel's prophecies extend all the way to the Roman Empire. The future—in contrast to his pretext—lets Hippolytus begin with the feet of the statue (*Dan.* 11.12.2) or the ten horns of the terrible beast (*Dan.* 1V.5–11).²⁸ They predict the future disintegration of the Roman Empire at the end of the world (*Dan.* 1V.5.3; 6.4; 7.5f.; cf. *Dan.* 11.12.7). Following this disintegration will be the appearance of the Antichrist, prophesied by the little horn of the terrible beast (*Dan.* 1V.5.3; 12.4). Hippolytus specifically interprets the stone, which was cut off from the mountain “without hands” (*Dan*Th 2:34–35), as Christ, who on the threshold of the eschaton “comes from the heavens” to destroy all earthly kingdoms and then establish the heavenly kingdom of the saints (*Dan.* 11.13.1–3).²⁹

3.2 *The Four Kingdoms of Daniel in the Context of Daniel's Prophetic Acts*

Since Hippolytus provides only a cursory interpretation of the biblical book of Daniel, his interpretation of *Dan*Th 2 appears at the very beginning of his *Commentary on Daniel* (*Dan.* 11.1–13). It is preceded only by the extensive commentary on the SusannaTh narrative (*Dan.* 1), into which Hippolytus

26 Within the Jewish sphere, cf. Josephus, *Ant.* 10.209 (10.10.4) in connection with *Ant.* 10.276 (10.11.7) and 2 Esdras 11:1–12, 20. Within the Christian sphere, see Rev 13:1–10.

27 See Hipp. *Dan.* 11.12–13 und *Dan.* 1V.2–7.

28 See Bracht, “Einleitung,” XXXIII–XXXVI, a table comparing *Dan*Th 2, *Dan*Th 7, and Hippolytus's interpretation.

29 The interpretation of the stone from *Dan* 2:34, 45 as Christ is a frequent motif among the early church fathers and in the Greek *menaion*. Cf. also Irenaeus *Haer.* 3.21.7; 5.26.2; Cyril of Jerusalem, *Myst. Cat.* 1.8; Theodoret, *Comm. Dan.* 2.35 (with an emphasis on Christ's humanity); Justin, *Dial.* 76.1; Epiphanius, *Anc.* 40.5 (with an emphasis on Christ's divinity). See Katharina Bracht, “Die Danielrezeption in der orthodoxen Tradition und ihre altkirchlichen Wurzeln,” in *Logos im Dialogos: Auf der Suche nach der Orthodoxie: Gedenkschrift für Hermann Goltz*, ed. A. Briskina-Müller, A. Drost-Abgarjan, and A. Meißner (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2011), 77–90, here 87f.; Katharina Bracht, “Daniel (Book and Person) IV. Christianity a. Greek and Latin Patristics and Orthodox Churches,” *EBR* 6:109–115, here 111. Josephus (*Ant.* 10.210 [10.10.4]), on the other hand, explicitly conceals the interpretation of the stone since, as a historian, it is not his place to record future events.

also inserted his commentary on DanTh 1 (*Dan.* 1.6–12). In his commentary on the narrative of how the Jewish prisoner of war, Daniel, in contrast to the Babylonian sages who were initially summoned, manages to describe and interpret the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the four-part statue, Hippolytus primarily takes up the motif that Daniel proves himself to be a prophet in this scene.

Hippolytus begins with the dream itself. He characterizes it as a “heavenly dream” that will be fulfilled “according to the plan and foreknowledge of God, which is fulfilled in their own times” (*Dan.* 11.2.1). That God hid not only the interpretation, but even the dream itself from the dreamer had its purpose in that he revealed it to another, namely Daniel—and *per definitionem*, the dream interpreter Daniel thereby proves himself to be a prophet (*Dan.* 11.2.5 with *passivum divinum*). With the help of the parallel to the narrative of Joseph, who interpreted the dreams of Pharaoh (*Gen*^{LXX} 41:1–38), Hippolytus shows that it is possible to infer that one has the gift of the spirit if that person is capable of interpreting dreams (*Dan.* 11.2.4f.). After Hippolytus repeatedly expressed this thought in his further comments on Daniel 2 (*Dan.* 11.6.7: Daniel as a prophet of God; cf. 11.5.2: Daniel is God-fearing and worthy [of revelation]), he emphasizes it again in the last sentence of his interpretation of Daniel 2, which is a particularly significant passage: Daniel confirms the truth of the dream and the reliability of the interpretation just given to possible doubters by virtue of his prophetic ministry (*Dan.* 11.13.4).

In this passage, Hippolytus clearly elaborates on Daniel's spirit-given gift of prophetic ministry, reinforcing and hammering down the authority of Daniel's prophecies—and thus the authoritative status of his pretext for his readers—for all the commentary that follows. At the same time, he considers that ambiguities can arise for readers of the book of Daniel, and, therefore, makes it clear that Daniel's interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream also needs to be interpreted by them. Such interpretation demands accuracy and must reject superficiality. In short, Hippolytus demands that interpretation of the book of Daniel meets a scholarly standard (*Dan.* 11.11.1–2).³⁰ The interpreter must satisfy the criteria that he has a clear mind, loves the truth, and has researched thoroughly (*Dan.* 11.11.1–2). Thus, Hippolytus formulates an interpretative standard which he develops in his *Commentary on Daniel*, and thereby confers upon himself a seal of approval, so to speak.

Thus, the authorities (i) of the divine revelation in the “heavenly dream,” (ii) of the prophets gifted with the Spirit, and (iii) of the intelligent, scholarly interpreter come together, when Hippolytus presents the statue as a

30 See section above on “The Challenges of the Exegesis of Daniel around 200 C.E.”

“typological prediction of the kingdom of all the world” (τὸν τύπον περιείχεν τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ παντὸς κόσμου; *Dan.* 11.12.1) in the central passage of *Dan.* 11.12–13. He begins with the golden head of the statue, which he understands to be the Babylonian kingdom (*Dan.* 11.12.3), in accordance with the interpretation given in *Dan*Th 2:37f. Concerning the subsequent kingdoms, whose coming is prophesied as being future in the book of Daniel (*Dan*Th 2:39–43), Hippolytus identifies three of them as having already arrived: the Persian, the Greek, and the Roman kingdoms (*Dan.* 11.12.4–6). He names precisely the duration of each respective kingdom, fulfilling the self-imposed demand for accuracy. The Persians ruled for 245 years, and the Greeks ruled for 300 years.³¹ By demonstrating so concretely that Daniel’s prophecy had already been fulfilled in large parts, even up to the mention of dates, Hippolytus underpins its credibility and strengthens its authority. He also uses this credibility for the prophecies that have yet to be fulfilled, that is, for the typologies of the clay and the iron toes of the statue and of the stone that comes from heaven (*Dan.* 11.12.7; 13.1–4).

Within this schema of world history, Hippolytus’s present time, during the age of the Roman Empire, is at the penultimate point in his construal of world history: he is located at a time before the second coming of Christ and the eschatological kingdom of the saints (*Dan.* 11.13.2). Although the collapse of the fourth world empire into regional states is still yet to come, it is conceived as a separate phase of world history (*Dan.* 11.12.7). The thrust of the interpretation of *Dan*Th 2, however, lies not so much in this schema but rather in establishing as early as possible within the commentary the authority of both Daniel’s prophecies and their interpretation within the present commentary. For this is the hermeneutical foundation on which Hippolytus’s further interpretation of the book of Daniel stands.

3.3 *The Four Kingdoms of Daniel in the Context of a Premature Expectation of the End*

3.3.1 The Opponents

In the fourth book of the *Commentary on Daniel*, Hippolytus has before him a current, concrete problem on which he takes a stand with his interpretation of Daniel’s four kingdoms. He turns against Christians who wish to make concrete end-time calculations. Already at an early point in his expositions

31 Hipp. *Dan.* 11.12.4f. Cf. *Dan.* 1V.3.4 (Persian rule was only 230 years, nevertheless Hippolytus in his efforts for historical precision and scholarly integrity states in the following sentence [1V.3.5] that the Persian rule lasted about 245 years according to other historians); 1V.4.1 (Greeks); 1V.2.4.7. See below in section entitled “Calculations of the Present and the End Time.”

(*Dan.* IV.5.6), he emphasizes what he will explain in detail later (*Dan.* IV.15.1–24.6). Readers are to reject the question of “when” these last events will occur, while nevertheless believing “that” they will occur in the future. On the other hand, he finds it appropriate to believe that the predictions in the book of Daniel will come true, but without talking about the details that might be connected with those predictions (*Dan.* IV.5.6).

Hippolytus describes the Christian group he rejected as follows. They want to know exactly “in what season or time is the deceiver to be revealed” and “what shall be the day of the appearing of the Lord” (ποίη δὲ καιρῶ ἢ χρόνῳ μέλλει ὁ πλάνος ἀποκαλύπτεσθαι; καὶ ποία ἡ ἡμέρα τῆς τοῦ κυρίου ἐπιφανείας; *Dan.* IV.16.1). They want to calculate “how many years remain for the beast (sc. the Roman Empire)” (πόσα ἔτη περιλείπεται τῷ θηρίῳ; *Dan.* IV.21.4) and to determine “the day of the Lord,” that is, “the consummation of all the world” (τὴν ἡμέραν τοῦ κυρίου; τὴν συντέλειαν τοῦ παντὸς κόσμου; *Dan.* IV.22.1). Accordingly, these opponents tend towards an imminent expectation of the end, which views the appearance of the Lord as being imminent (*Dan.* IV.17.7f.).³²

Hippolytus rebukes these attempts at calculation, which “seek a time before the due time” (πρὸ καιροῦ καιρὸν ἐπιζητοῦντα), as “rash and heedless” (εἰκαῖόν τε καὶ προαλή; *Dan.* IV.15.1) and “troublesome” (περίεργος; *Dan.* IV.21.4) and “doing busy, yet wasted research” (πολυπραγμονεῖν; *Dan.* IV.22.1). He warns that the one who examines and talks about such questions related to calculations attracts danger for himself by longing for judgment (*Dan.* IV.21.4f.) and “his own soul becomes liable” (ἔνοχος γένηται τῆς ἰδίας ψυχῆς; *Dan.* IV.15.1). All in all, Hippolytus rejects what he considers to be an unseemly curiosity that is not satisfied with the fact of Christ’s return and the end of the world, but makes concrete calculations on the basis of years.

As deterrent examples, he begins by citing cases in Syria and in Pontus which had recently happened³³ and in which the situation developed “similarly” (ὁμοίως; *Dan.* IV.19.1). That is to say, Hippolytus cites the two events as two proofs of one and the same thing. In Syria, a church leader persuaded many

32 Hippolytus’s rhetorical question is as follows: “And so while the abomination has not yet appeared, but while only the fourth beast still reigns, how is the manifestation of the Lord able to be?” (τοῦ οὖν βδελύγματος μηδέπω παραγενομένου, ἀλλ’ ἔτι τοῦ τετάρτου θηρίου μόνου κρατούντος, πῶς δύναται ἡ ἐπιφάνεια τοῦ κυρίου γενέσθαι; *Dan.* IV.17.7). Hippolytus enumerates the necessary signs according to Matthew 24, which have not yet come to pass.

33 Both examples are all the more serious as they tell of the theological error of high church officials. Richard Landes draws attention to this in his work, “Lest the Millennium Be Fulfilled: Apocalyptic Expectations and the Pattern of Western Chronography 100–800 CE,” in *The Use and Abuse of Eschatology in the Middle Ages*, ed. Werner Verbeke, Daniel Verhelst, and Andries Welkenhuysen, ML 15 (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1988), 137–211, esp. 147.

church members to go into the desert or into the mountains to meet Christ there for his return. But the expectation was not fulfilled; instead, the wandering Christians became a public nuisance. Only the coincidence that the governor's wife was a Christian and had spoken to her husband on behalf of Christians avoided a real persecution (*Dan.* IV.18.1–5). Hippolytus cites the case in Syria as an example of an erroneous, imminent expectation of the end that was caused by folly, a lack of education (*Dan.* IV.18.4), and insufficient reading of the scriptures (*Dan.* IV.18.2).³⁴

In Pontus, a church leader had trusted in his own visions, which had been given to him in dreams, instead of in holy scripture. He began prophesying as a prophet and even wanted to make his prophecies the yardstick for the credibility of the biblical scriptures. Eventually, he prophesied that the judgment would take place in a year's time. But when the judgment did not take place, this stoked anger among the members of his congregation. They gave up their rigorous ethics which were fashioned according to their imminent expectation of the end. The virgins married and the men looked once again to the future by going back to their daily work and tilling the fields. Those who had sold their possessions in anticipation of the imminent end became beggars (*Dan.* IV.19.1–6). In this example, the problem has to do with a new prophecy, that is, the appearance of a prophet who places his authority above the authority of scripture and wants to make the fulfillment of his prophecy the criterion for the truth of scripture.³⁵

Hippolytus then adds a third, contemporary phenomenon, saying that “some undertake the same things, clinging to vain visions and to the teachings of demons and often determining a fast both on the Sabbath and the Lord's day, which Christ did not determine” (cf. 1 Tim 4:1, 3; Hipp. *Dan.* IV.20.3). In this third case, the issue is fasting on unbiblical fast days, that is, a pronounced rigorism that is not covered by the scriptures or Christ's teaching.³⁶

34 See above the section entitled, “The Challenges of the Exegesis of Daniel around 200 CE.”

35 The supposition that by the event in Pontus Montanus himself is meant (thus Gerbern S. Oegema, “Die Danielrezeption in der Alten Kirche,” in *Europa, Tausendjähriges Reich und Neue Welt Zwei Jahrtausende Geschichte und Utopie in der Rezeption des Danielbuches*, ed. Mariano Delgado, Klaus Koch, and Edgar Marsch, SCRK 1 [Freiburg: Universitätsverlag, 2003], 1:84–104, esp. 1:89) is probably not correct due to the temporal and geographical conditions and due to the fact that Montanus worked much earlier (probably ca. 172 CE) in Phrygia. For dating, see Christoph Marksches, “Montanism,” in *Religion Past and Present*, ed. Hans Dieter Betz, Don S. Browning, Bernd Janowski, and Eberhard Jüngel, BrillOnline (Leiden: Brill, 2011).

36 On this, see Ronald E. Heine, *The Montanist Oracles and Testimonia*, PatMS 14 (Macon, GA: Catholic University of America Press, 1989), 54–57; and William H. C. Frend, “Montanism,” *TRE* 23:271–279, here 23:272.1.

All three cases listed by Hippolytus have Montanist traits: the importance of visions that are placed above scripture, even seen as the yardstick for scripture;³⁷ the imminent expectation of the end;³⁸ the rigorous ethical standards that are demonstrated here by the example of fasting,³⁹ abstaining from marriage, and the lack of possessions;⁴⁰ and finally the strong position of women in the congregation, which can be seen here both in the influential wife of the governor of Syria and in the virginity of the women in the congregation at Pontus. Hippolytus probably distinguishes himself from certain Montanistic outgrowths among members of his congregation,⁴¹ which he wanted to put on the right, orthodox path through his interpretation of Daniel, in order to restore unity in the congregation.⁴²

37 See Gottlieb Nathanael Bonwetsch, *Studien zu den Kommentaren Hippolyts: zum Buche Daniel und Hohen Liede*, TU 16 (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1897); cf. (Ps-) Hipp. Ref. 8.19; 10.25 (Heine, *Montanist Oracles*, 56–57, num. 32, 33); Tert. *Castit.* 10.5 (Heine, *Montanist Oracles*, 4–5, num. 10).

38 Cf. Epiph. *Pan.* 48.2.4 (Heine, *Montanist Oracles*, 2–3, num. 6).

39 Cf. (Ps-)Hipp. Ref. 8.19; 10.25 (Heine, *Montanist Oracles*, num. 32; 33).

40 Cf. Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 5.18.2.

41 Contra the all too cautious evaluation of William Tabbernee, *Fake Prophecy and Polluted Sacraments: Ecclesiastical and Imperial Reactions to Montanism*, VCSup 84 (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 75–76. See, however, Christian Badilita, *Métamorphoses de l'Antichrist chez les Pères de l'Église*, ThH 116 (Paris: Beauchesne, 2005), 235, who cautiously, but unfortunately without evidence, also accepts an antimontanist initiative of Hippolytus. The assumption that the imminent expectation of the end by Hippolytus's opponents could be explained by a situation of current persecution does not go far enough; contra Bernard McGinn, *Antichrist: Two Thousand Years of the Human Fascination with Evil* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 60; and Katharina Bracht, "Logos parainetikos: der Danielkommentar des Hippolyt," in *Die Geschichte der Daniel-Auslegung in Judentum, Christentum und Islam: Studien zur Kommentierung des Danielbuches in Literatur und Kunst*, ed. Katharina Bracht and David S. du Toit, BZAW 371 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2007), 79–97, here 88.

42 Cf. the detailed discussion of the question in Bonwetsch, *Studien*, 75–77, who also assumes that the polemic is caused by Montanist efforts to gain a foothold in Rome. That there were Montanists in Rome in Hippolytus's day is evident from Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 2.25.5–7 and 6.20.3, where Eusebius reports on a dialogue against Proclus, a "leader of the Phrygian sect" (Πρόκλος τῆς κατὰ Φρύγας προϊσταμένης γνώμης; *Hist. eccl.* 2.25.6), written by Gaius in Rome during the tenure of Zephyrinus (198–217 CE). That Hippolytus was close to the Montanists, or at least sympathized with them, is also evident from his *Capita contra Gaium*, in which he deals with arguments, some of which similarly appear in the *Commentary on Daniel* (see c. *Gaium* 6), against this antimontanistic writing of Gaius (received in seven fragments in the commentary on John's Apocalypse by Dionysius Bar-Salibi, in "Contra Gaium," in *Dionysius bar Šalibī: in apocalypsim, actus et epistulas catholicas*, ed. Jaroslav Sedláček, CSCO 53/18 (Paris: Poussielgue, 1909); Latin version: "Contra Gaium," in *Dionysius bar Šalibī: in apocalypsim, actus et epistulas catholicas*, ed. Jaroslav Sedláček, CSCO 60/20 (Rome: Luigi, 1910); German translation: "Contra Gaium,"

3.3.2 The Four Kingdoms of Daniel in Light of the New Testament as an Argument against End Time Calculations

Hippolytus is not only concerned with refuting this concrete phenomenon. Instead, beneath this concrete example, he perceives a fundamental, theological pattern that he clearly already recognizes in the New Testament. Therefore, he formulates the question of his opponents in the words of the Gospel of Matthew: “when will this be?” (πότε ταῦτα ἔσται; Matt 24:3; Hipp. *Dan.* IV.16.1) and refers to the fact that Jesus’s disciples similarly asked about the time of the parousia (*Dan.* IV.16.2f., 6 with reference to Matt 25:15). He also notes that the congregation in Thessalonica was disturbed by an imminent expectation of the end (*Dan.* IV.21.2 with reference to 2 Thess 2:1–9). Accordingly, Hippolytus uses New Testament passages in his argument to reject such efforts at concrete end time calculations, but specifically selects passages from the biblical book of Daniel.

First, Hippolytus cites Jesus’s call to vigilance concerning the unknown date of his second coming, taken from Matt 25:1–13; Matt 24:42–51; and Mark 13:33–37 (*Dan.* IV.16.2–5), and the rejection of such questions by the risen one (Acts 1:6–8; Hipp. *Dan.* IV.16.6). Hippolytus also refers to the signs that announce the parousia (*Dan.* IV.17.1, 6). In this first passage, he mentions the abomination of desolation, which will stand “in the holy place” and marks the beginning of the great tribulation that precedes the end (quotation from Matt 24:15–33; *Dan.* IV.17.4f.).⁴³ Thus, the sign prophesied by Jesus is understood by Hippolytus to be a chronological prerequisite. He argues that the parousia cannot yet take place because the abomination has not yet occurred (*Dan.* IV.17.7). For Hippolytus, the credibility of Jesus’s prophecy results from the observation that another one of his prophecies, specifically that of the siege and destruction of Jerusalem (Luke 21:20), has already been fulfilled. Accordingly, one can also assume the same credibility of Jesus’s prophecy about the signs pertaining to his parousia (*Dan.* IV.17.3).⁴⁴

in *Hippolyt's kleinere exegetische und homiletische Schriften*, ed. Hans Achelis, trans. Friedrich Schulthess, GCS 1–2 (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1897), 239–47.

43 Hippolytus omits the explicit reference to the book of Daniel (Dan 9:27; 11:31), which Matthew includes. Matthew 24:15 says here, “as was spoken by the prophet Daniel” (τὸ ρηθὲν διὰ Δανιήλ τοῦ προφήτου). In this passage, Hippolytus identifies the abomination with the Antichrist, see Hipp. *Dan.* IV.49.3.

44 Hippolytus has in mind the conquest and destruction of Jerusalem and the Second Temple after a long siege and famine in the year 70 CE by the Romans under Titus. Hippolytus is not aware that Luke 21:20 is a *vaticinium ex eventu*, since the Gospel of Luke was written after 70 CE. With a skillful use of the mixed quotation from Luke 21:9–11 and Matt 24:6–8, 33, Hippolytus disproves the opposing argument, see Bracht, *Hippolyt's Schrift*, 310–311.

As a second argument against end time calculations, Hippolytus quotes the passage from 2 Thess 2:1–9 (*Dan.* IV.21.1–3), in which Paul turns against a similar problem of an imminent expectation of the end like the one confronting Hippolytus's own congregation. Hippolytus takes up "the one who now restrains it" (ὁ κατέχων ἄρτι ἔως; *Dan.* IV.21.3 / 2 Thess 2:7) out of the series of events that, according to 2 Thess 2:3–10, still must occur before the parousia of Christ. He interprets this phrase in light of the fourth beast from Daniel 7, which he previously interpreted as the Roman Empire of his own time (*Dan.* IV.5.1). Only when the Roman Empire has perished, will the deceiver come, whom Christ will then destroy upon his return (*Dan.* IV.21.3).

Thus, Hippolytus uses Daniel's four kingdom schema as it is received by the New Testament authors to show that detailed calculations of the last days up to the year (*Dan.* IV.21.4), the day (*Dan.* IV.16.1), or the hour (*Dan.* IV.16.3) are illegitimate.

3.3.3 Calculations of the Present and the End Time

In order to locate his present age in the course of history presented within his pretext and at the same time to identify the future events still to come before the end time, Hippolytus draws on Daniel's vision of the four animals and the Son of Man (*Hipp. Dan.* IV.1.1–14.4; 24.7–9),⁴⁵ following the cursory interpretation given in the book of Daniel itself, and also on the vision of the ram and the male goat (Daniel 8; *Hipp. Dan.* IV.26.1–27.1)—although, according to Hippolytus's own statement, the latter vision only offers a repetition (*Dan.* IV.26.1).⁴⁶ His major aim is to thereby postpone the expectation of the parousia into the more distant future in contrast with his opponents who cherished an imminent expectation of the end and an interest in more detailed end time calculations.

Inspired by his pretext, Hippolytus first looks into the past, in which several kingdoms replaced each other (*Hipp. Dan.* IV.24.7). Of the three past world kingdoms—Babylon, Persia, and Greece, which in his opinion are symbolized by the first three animals from Daniel 7—he lists only the last two.⁴⁷ Here is when exact figures come into the discussion: the Persians ruled for 230 years and the Greeks for 300 years.⁴⁸ The fourth beast stands for the present kingdom,

45 Hippolytus's interpretation of Daniel 7 is interrupted by the excursus on the question of the legitimacy of end time calculations (*Dan.* IV.15.1–24.6).

46 See below at section entitled, "Hippolytus's Past, Present, and Future against the Background of the Four Kingdoms of Daniel."

47 See above at section entitled, "Hippolytus's Concept of Time and the End Time."

48 Cf. *Dan.* IV.3.4f.; IV.4.1, as well as the above section entitled, "The Four Kingdoms of Daniel in the Context of Daniel's Prophetic Acts."

specifically the Roman Empire. Hippolytus recognizes an increase in strength which he attributes to the duration of the respective world kingdoms: from Persia to Greece, there had been an increase in the duration of the kingdom from 230 to 300 years. Consequently, so he extrapolates, the contemporary Roman Empire must last longer, namely 500 years (cf. *Dan.* 1v.23.3f.; 24.1). This implies that, from the time of Hippolytus, another 300 years will pass until the end of the Roman Empire.

For the still outstanding future, Hippolytus sketches the sequence of events that have to occur before Christ's parousia according to the prophecy of the book of Daniel (*Dan.* 1v.24.9). It consists of four or five "stations." These include: (i) the disintegration of the Roman Empire at the end of its 500 year existence (cf. *Dan.* 1v.12.4), (ii) the appearance of the Antichrist (*Dan.* 1v.24.7), (iii) the persecution of the church (cf. *Dan.* 7:21), and (iv) the actual parousia, which will be connected with (v) the last judgment (*Dan.* 1v.24.8). In his interpretation of Daniel 7–8, Hippolytus refrains from giving more precise dates or spans of time for the remaining stages of history. He makes it clear by the sequence of several important events of the last days alone that the parousia that follows lies in the distant future. With this location of his present age in the course of world history and with this sketch of the events to be expected in the future, Hippolytus makes it clear that an imminent expectation of the end, as represented by his opponents, is erroneous. Rather, he establishes for his readers a perspective of about 300 years that are still to pass before even the sequence of events that mark that the end time begins.

3.3.4 Hippolytus's Past, Present, and Future against the Background of the Four Kingdoms of Daniel

3.3.4.1 *Past*

Daniel's vision of the ram and the male goat (Daniel 8) provides Hippolytus with the opportunity to present the recent past around Antiochus IV Epiphanes in more detail (*Dan.* 1v.26.1–28.1). He interprets the repetition of Daniel 8 in relation to Daniel 7 as a means of "the building up of the faithful" (πρὸς οἰκοδομὴν τῶν πιστευόντων; *Dan.* 1v.26.1). That the first kingdom in world history, the Babylonian kingdom, does not appear in this vision is not mentioned by Hippolytus. Apparently, the absence of Babylon is irrelevant to him at this point.

In accordance with the interpretation given by the biblical text itself (*Dan.* 8:20–26), Hippolytus defines the ram as the king of Persia, Darius, and the male goat, or in particular the great horn between his eyes, as the king of the Greeks, Alexander (*Dan.* 1v.26.2f.). The four horns that emerge after the great horn is smashed (*Dan.* 8:22) represent the four Diadochian kingdoms into

which Alexander's kingdom was divided after his death (*Dan.* 1V.26.5f.). At this point, Hippolytus adds hardly anything new beyond the interpretation that is already contained within the book of Daniel itself. On the other hand, he details the note about the one strong horn that emerges from among the other horns (*Dan* 8:9) by supplementing the corresponding individual details from 1 Maccabees 1. With this, he makes it unmistakably clear that the one horn from *Dan* 8:9 stands for Antiochus IV Epiphanes, who cruelly suppressed the Jewish temple cult in Jerusalem (*Dan.* 1V.26.6). In all this, Hippolytus aims to prove through scriptural evidence⁴⁹ that Daniel's visions and the associated prophecies of events that were still pending in Daniel's age (i.e., reserved for the future from Daniel's perspective) have actually been fulfilled in the meantime (*Dan.* 1V.26.6; 27.1). According to Hippolytus, *Daniel* 8 does not contain any prophecies that are yet to be fulfilled from his vantage point.

3.3.4.2 *Present*

In his commentary on *Daniel* 7, Hippolytus devotes special attention to the interpretation of his present age. In so doing, he looks at the text of *Daniel* through "New Testament colored glasses" by reading the text of *Daniel* against the background of ideas gained from the New Testament.⁵⁰ He points out that the fourth beast—which in *Daniel* 7 is not associated with a particular species or genus of animal, but is only described as particularly terrifying and horrible—represents the Roman Empire (*Dan.* 1V.5.1f.).⁵¹ According to Hippolytus, this can be determined on the basis of the destructive nature of the Roman Empire, which corresponds to the iron teeth of the beast and his way of trampling everything with his feet (*Dan.* 1V.5.2). Additionally, he attributes the pretext's refrain from assigning the animal to a particular species to the peculiarities of the Roman Empire, which does not consist of people from a specific race or language. Rather, it is a gathering of people from all nations for the purpose of setting up an armed force (*Dan.* 1V.8.1–7)—also here, Hippolytus's critical view of the Roman Empire becomes especially clear.

The Roman Empire draws its strength from the power of the devil, as Hippolytus states with an allusion to 2 Thess 2:9. In so doing, it apes the work of Christ (*Dan.* 1V.9.2f.). Just as Christ, according to Matt 28:19, called together Christians from all peoples and languages, bearing in their hearts the new

49 Note the coordination of 1 Maccabees 1 in Hipp. *Dan.* 1V.26.6 and *Dan* 8:15–27 in Hipp. *Dan.* 1V.27.1.

50 Cf. the section above on "The Four Kingdoms of *Daniel* in Light of the New Testament as an Argument against End Time Calculations."

51 Cf. Hipp. *Antichr.* 28.33.

name, that is, the name of Christ (cf. Acts 2:17), so too the Roman Empire at the same time under the emperor Augustus and in the same way gathered together the best from all peoples and called them “Romans.” The aping, of course, is reversed. In the Roman Empire, the gathering of peoples is seen as the establishment of an armed force for the devastating, deadly war, whereas the Christians have won the battle for life, as the sign of victory on their foreheads shows, namely, “the trophy against death” (τὸ τρόπαιον τὸ κατὰ τοῦ θανάτου; *Dan.* IV.9.3).⁵²

The aping of Christ is actually a characteristic of the Antichrist, but his coming, according to *Dan.* IV.5.3, is still outstanding.⁵³ The logical bridge lies in the fact that the Roman Empire rules “in Satan’s power,” that is, belongs to the complex around the devil. It is, so to speak, a precursor of the kingdom of the Antichrist because only “when lawlessness multiplies in the world” (ἡνίκα πληθυνθῆ ἡ ἀνομία ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ) and the Roman kingdom declines, “then the end shall come upon them” (“τότε ἔξει” ἐπ’ αὐτοῦς “τὸ τέλος,” *Dan.* IV.6.4 with a citation of Matt 24:14).⁵⁴ But at present, the Roman Empire is “yet beginning to culminate” (*Dan.* IV.10.2). Hippolytus concludes from his pretext that no earthly kingdom will follow it.

52 In this passage, Hippolytus does not take note of the time span that must have elapsed between the census under Augustus mentioned in Luke 2:1–7 or the birth of Jesus, which according to him took place in the forty-second year of Augustus’s reign (cf. Hipp. *Dan.* IV.23.3), and the mission by the apostles according to the Great Commission in Matt 28:19, to which he alludes, if one starts from the historicity of these statements (Hipp. *Dan.* IV.9.2f.). For him, all this belongs to Christ’s first parousia. Thus, for Hippolytus, these details are important only for the fact that they happened and are not factored into his temporal extension of the second coming.

53 Cf. Hipp. *Antichr.* 6 on the aping of Christ by the Antichrist and *Antichr.* 29–36 on the negative view of Rome (*Antichr.* 36–38: Rome as the whore of Babylon).

54 See Bonwetsch, *Studien*, 47; McGinn, *Antichrist*, 61. According to Hipp. *Antichr.* 49, the Antichrist will restore the Roman Empire, which had previously fallen into ten parts. Also, in his later *Chronicon*, Hippolytus expresses his negative view, even “contempt” of the Roman Empire by adding a list of the Roman emperors only as an appendix. See Friedhelm Winkelmann, “Historiographie,” in *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum: Sachwörterbuch zur Auseinandersetzung des Christentums mit der antiken Welt*, ed. Ernst Dassmann (Stuttgart: Hiersemann 1991), 1:724–65, here 1:751. The short presentation by Per Beskow, *Rex Gloriam: The Kingship of Christ in the Early Church* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1962), 176–77, unfortunately lacks the differentiation between the Roman Empire at Hippolytus’s time as forerunner of the anti-Christian empire and the Roman Empire restored by the Antichrist in the last days. Also, the formulation of Badilita, *Métamorphoses*, 253, that in Hippolytus the Roman Empire contains the future empire of the Antichrist *in nuce* does not account for the facts of the case.

3.3.4.3 *Future*

According to Hippolytus, the prophesied but still pending future of earthly events begins with the ten horns of the terrible animal, or the ten toes of the statue. They point typologically to serious changes in the political conditions—the disintegration of the Roman Empire (Dan 7:7 // Hipp. *Dan.* IV.5.3; 12.4; Dan 2:33 // Hipp. *Dan.* IV.7.5f.)—which indicates the beginning of the events of the last days. This in turn leads to the consummation of the world (cf. *Dan.* IV.5.1, 3). At this point, the parallelization of Daniel 7 and Daniel 2, which Hippolytus carries out, reaches its limits because the metaphors of the pretext diverge. In the fourth book of his *Commentary on Daniel*, Hippolytus follows the pretext which, according to the continuous citation of the biblical book of Daniel, brings Daniel 7 and Daniel 8 into view.⁵⁵

The small horn that appears among these horns stands for the Antichrist (Dan 7:8 // Hipp. *Dan.* IV.5.3, 12.4). The three horns that the small horn rips out stand for the fact that the Antichrist will remove three of the kings⁵⁶ in order to possess the entire kingdom for himself (*Dan.* IV.12.4). Hippolytus pursues this interpretation further, going beyond Daniel 7, but following 2 Thess 2:4 and Acts 13:12, 15, accepting the victory of the Antichrist over the other seven horns as well (*Dan.* IV.12.5) so that the Antichrist finally has dominion over the whole earth.

When he has achieved this autocracy due to his foreign policy success, he turns, so to speak, to domestic politics and persecutes the “saints” (i.e., the Christians or the church). This persecution will be universal in the sense that “all of them everywhere” would be persecuted, and would be based on the Antichrist’s claim to absolute authority and his desire to be glorified and worshipped by all like God (πάντας πανταχοῦ διώκειν, βουλόμενος ὑπὸ πάντων δοξάζεσθαι καὶ προσκυνεῖσθαι ὡς θεός; *Dan.* IV.12.5).

Finally, the one who is “like the Son of Man” stands for the Son of God who acts as judge (Dan 7:13 // Hipp. *Dan.* IV.10.2). At this point, by way of intertextual allusion, the parallel between the one who is “like a Son of Man” from Dan 7:13 and the stone from Dan 2:34–35 comes into play. The “Son of Man” (i.e., the Son of God as judge, Christ in his second coming) will remove all kingdoms of the world and, as Hippolytus expresses with words from Dan 2:35,

55 Therefore, he no longer explicitly mentions at this point the stone which, according to Dan 2:34, “was cut off, not by human hands” and which he had previously interpreted as Christ who transformed the world kingdoms and established the heavenly kingdoms of the saints (*Dan.* II.13.1–2). Instead, he continues with his commentary on Daniel 7 with the horns of the terrible beast.

56 These are specifically the kings of Egypt, Libya, and Ethiopia, cf. Dan 11:43 and Hipp. *Dan.* IV.49.4.

“shall scatter them as chaff from the summer threshing floor” (διασπερεί αὐτὰς ὡσεὶ κονιορτὸν ἀπὸ ἄλωνος θερινῆς; *Dan.* IV.10.3).

For Hippolytus, the return of Christ and the judgment connected with it form the threshold between the earthly and eschatological. In a sense, they represent the last event of this world and at the same time the beginning of the “heavenly things” (*Dan.* IV.10.2). Therefore, Hippolytus speaks of the Son of Man from *Dan* 7:13 as “the first fruits of our resurrection” (ἀπαρχὴ τῆς ἡμετέρας ἀναστάσεως αὐτὸς γεννηθῆ; *Dan.* IV.11.3–5, quotation here from 11.5; cf. 1 Cor 15:23). The heavenly kingdom of the saints, on the other hand, or the kingdom of Christ, which he compares with the stone from *Dan* 2:34 (*Dan.* II.13.2), is no longer of this world.⁵⁷ With 2 Peter 3:9, Hippolytus assumes that Christ delays his parousia in order not to bring judgment before the time ordained by God the Father (*Dan.* IV.10.4). The time up until the occurrence of the events of the last days has not yet been fulfilled (*Dan.* IV.12.2)—this is a further sign that Christ’s parousia is not imminent.

Hippolytus provides this assessment of the future with a further point against his opponents’ imminent expectation of the end by emphasizing that Christians, with all certainty that the described events of the last days will occur sometime in the future, should pray that they will not occur during their lifetime (*Dan.* IV.5.4). The “great tribulation” (θλίψις ἢ μεγάλη), as he puts it using the wording of Matt 24:21, which belongs to the events of the last days, would present such an immense temptation to apostasy that there would be a danger that Christians would not obtain eternal life (*Dan.* IV.12.2). In this way, he characterizes Christ’s imminent parousia—the object of his Montanistic opponent’s hope—in a manner contrary to his opponents’ hopes and instead as an undesirable, threatening danger.

57 Hippolytus explicitly opposes a potential erroneous opinion that the kingdom given to the Son of Man according to *Dan* 7:13 by the “Ancient of Days,” whom he interprets as the Father of Christ (*Dan.* IV.11.2), is an earthly kingdom (*Dan.* IV.11.4). It is possible that Hippolytus turns against representatives of a chiliastically oriented Montanism here as well as in the whole fourth book of his *Commentary on Daniel*. He corrects the Chiliastic understanding of the future kingdom of Christ as an earthly kingdom on the basis of his interpretation of *Dan* 7:14, claiming instead that this kingdom is the eternal glory of Christ. Since Hippolytus corrects only this one element of the Chiliastic conception of the course of the world but takes a positive view of the remaining elements, particularly the assumption of a duration of the world of 6,000 years plus 1,000 years (*Dan.* IV.23.4–24.6), one cannot speak of a rejection but rather a modification of Chiliastic ideas in Hippolytus (cf. Stefan Heid, *Chiliasmus und Antichrist-Mythos: Eine frühchristliche Kontroverse um das Heilige Land*, *Hereditas* 6 [Bonn: Borengässer 1993], 127, 220; against Charles E. Hill, *Regnum Caelorum: Patterns of Millennial Thought in Early Christianity*, 2nd rev. and enl. ed. [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001], 161–65, 169).

4 Conclusion

The four kingdoms of Daniel with the subsequent eschatological kingdom of God are the biblical material from which Hippolytus develops his understanding of time and history. He arrives at his understanding through a typological interpretation that is guided by the New Testament's reception of the book of Daniel. The fact that Hippolytus orients himself to the book of Daniel, and even more, makes it the normative yardstick for his conception of history, is due to its canonical authority and the esteem in which it is held by Christians, an esteem that is bestowed upon it in part by its reception within the Synoptic Gospels. The character of *Commentary on Daniel* is determined by Hippolytus's attempt to overcome the difficulties of understanding the biblical book of Daniel caused by the temporal and cultural distance (which Jan Assmann, cited above, referred to as "the stretching of the communicative situation") between the biblical book of Daniel—which lies before him in the form of Theodotion's translation—and his Roman readership around 200 CE. His attempt to overcome these difficulties manifests itself in the lemma-commentary approach he takes within the commentary. The four kingdoms of Daniel, which appear in two places within the biblical book of Daniel (Daniel 2, 7–8), are relevant for a twofold reason. First, the interpretation of DanTh 2 primarily is of hermeneutical relevance since Hippolytus uses it to strengthen the authority of the pretext that is to be interpreted and the authority of the interpreter, that is his own authority as commentator. Second, with his interpretation of DanTh 7–8, Hippolytus assigns a pressing, contemporary relevance to the book of Daniel, especially to its schema of the four kingdoms with the kingdom of God following thereafter, by reacting to what were likely Montanistically shaped currents in his church that were marked by an imminent expectation of the end and by rejecting them with the combined authority of the divine revelation, the prophets gifted with the Spirit, and rigorous scholarly interpretation.

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Persia, Rome and the Four Kingdoms Motif in the Babylonian Talmud

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1 Introduction*

Apocalypses and the classical rabbinic literature are usually treated as two distinct genres with little overlap.¹ While the rabbis would surely have been aware of the former, as many apocalyptic works are contemporaneous to them, the near absence of direct reference to apocalypses in their own compositions affirms their fundamentally rejectionist position with regard to this genre as a whole. The four kingdoms apocalyptic prophecy from the book of Daniel was nevertheless an important thematic construct for the rabbis. Yet, even with respect to such an apocalyptic text as this, as we shall be reminded, the rabbis have only a limited appetite. This paper will deal with the relation between Rome and Persia as perceived by the rabbis in light of this four kingdoms motif, focusing on the Babylonian rabbis and examining, in particular, a debate found in the Babylonian Talmud on whether or not Rome would ultimately subdue Persia.

The four kingdoms structure plays a major role in numerous rabbinic homilies, being linked to additional verses and subjects. For example, it is applied in the Mekhilta to non-kosher animals. In this tradition, the camel is Babylonia; the hare is Media; the rabbit is Greece and the boar is Rome. Or, alternatively, associations with the covenant of Abram are made via Gen 15:12, “As the sun was about to set, a deep sleep fell upon Abram and a great dark dread descended upon him.” This verse is interpreted such that “dread” refers to the

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1 See, for example, Shayna Sheinfeld, “The Decline of Second Temple Jewish Apocalypticism and the Rise of Rabbinic Judaism,” *Apocalypses in Context: Apocalyptic Currents through History*, ed. Kelly J. Murphy and Justin Jeffcoat Schedtler (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2016), 187–210; Shayna Sheinfeld, “Jewish Apocalyptic” in *End of Days: An Encyclopedia of the Apocalypse in World Religions*, ed. Wendell G. Johnson (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2017), 203. There are a few minor exceptions to this generalization, such as the conclusion of Mishna Sota, further expanded in the Tosefta. Although, with the early rabbinic literature focused on the law, one might wonder whether the rabbis were even conscious of this literature. Sources such as Tosefta Miqva’ot 8:6, which parodies Daniel, suggests, perhaps, an awareness of the apocalyptic texts that were presumably current at this period.

Babylonian Empire; “dark” to Media; “great” refers to the Greek Empire; and “descended” to “the fourth empire, wicked Rome.”² In other midrashic literature the four kingdoms are connected to the four rivers coming out from Eden; the four kings with whom Abraham made war in Genesis 14; and to the covenant with Abraham.³

We frequently see the four kingdoms structure plucked from its specific historical context in the book of Daniel and grafted onto other parts of the Bible. Such instances communicate that the servitude of the people of Israel is part of the divine plan from the beginning of the Jewish nation, even from creation.⁴ The significance and power of the kingdoms is enlarged in the rabbinic expositions to accentuate the connection between world history and Jewish history. Ultimately, one can agree with Rivka Raviv that the notion of the four kingdoms “is transformed from a marginal idea within the Bible to a central concept in the world of the Sages. It became one of the central motifs in all of biblical commentary.”⁵

Another recent article, by Jonathan Kaplan, is devoted to the appearance of this theme in the *Mekhilta de Rabbi Yishmael*.⁶ It is noteworthy that Raviv’s

2 Yithro Bahodesh, ix, *Mekhilta d-Rabbi Ismael*, eds. H. S. Horovitz and I. A. Rabin, 2nd ed. (Jerusalem: Shalem Books, 1997), 236; J. Z. Lauterbach, ed., *Mekhilta de-Rabbi Ishmael*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 2004), 339. Biblical citations are according to the NJPS (Second Edition, 1999) unless noted otherwise. All translations of rabbinic sources are my own, unless noted otherwise.

3 On the four rivers see Gen. Rab. (Theodor-Albeck edition, 146–48); and on the covenant with Abraham, see Gen. Rab. (Theodor-Albeck edition, 437). Note that for the first two items above the toponyms do not fit naturally with the kingdoms (e.g., Shinear = Greece).

4 See, for example, Gen. Rab. (Theodor-Albeck edition, 16–17):

רבי שמעון בן לקיש פתר קרייה במלכויות “והארץ היתה תהו”—זו בבל “ראיתי את הארץ והנה תהו” ובהו—זה מדי. ויבהילו להביא את המן “וחשך”—זה יוון שהחשיכה עיני ישראל בגזרותיה, שהיתה אומרת לישראל כתבו בקרן שור שאין להם חלק באלהי ישראל “על פני תהום” זן מלכות הרשעה הזו.

Translation: Rabbi Simeon the son of Laqish explained the verse as referring to the kingdoms: “The earth being unformed”—that is Babylon, “I look at the earth, it is unformed” (Jer 4:23) “and void”—that is Media, “and they hurriedly brought Haman” (Est 6:14), “with darkness”—that is Greece which darkened the eyes of Israel with its decrees, as it would tell Israel: write on the horn of an ox that they have no portion with the God of Israel, “over the surface of the deep”—that is that wicked kingdom.

5 R. Raviv, “The Talmudic Formulation of the Prophecies of the Four Kingdoms in the Book of Daniel,” *JSTJ* 5 (2006): 1–20 (Hebrew), here 9: “שבעיני החכמים הועצמה חשיבותו של המושג: “... שבעיני החכמים הועצמה חשיבותו של המושג: מושג זה ארבע מלכויות והוא הפך ממושג בשולי המקרא למושג מרכזי בעולמם של החכמים. מושג זה הפך להיות אחד המוטיבים המרכזיים בפרשנות המקרא כולו”

6 J. Kaplan, “Imperial Dominion and Israel’s Renown: ‘The Four Empires’ in *Mekilta de Rabbi Ishmael*,” in *Imagination, Ideology and Inspiration, Echoes of Brueggemann in a New*

study, in practice, and Kaplan's, by design, focus on the rabbinic midrashic sources from Palestine—particularly, but not exclusively, the Mekhilta and Genesis Rabbah—with the addition of some later sources. In addition, these materials are prior to the seventh century when major political events introduced changes to the construct. *Babylonian* Jewish sources, however, are not considered closely or separately.

It stands to reason, of course, that the perspective of rabbis living under the yoke of “Edom,” Rome, would differ to that of the rabbis living in Babylonia within a Persian realm. The question that interests me here, then, is how the rabbinic traditions from Babylonia compare with the interpretations current in the Palestinian rabbinic milieu. Did the rabbis in Babylonia see matters differently to their brethren in Palestine? I will, therefore, explore the discourse on this topic within the Babylonian Talmud, and the implicit interpretations of biblical sources that undergird this discourse.

2 Comparing Rome and Persia

The historical context for this question is crucial. Rome and Persia were the two superpowers of the period, poised against one another. This meant perpetual fear of conflict throughout the period in question and actual conflict a number of times in the course of the third and fourth centuries. This affected the way the rabbis read the prophecies from Daniel, as readily seen from this example found in b. Qidd. 72a as follows:

”ותלת עלעין בפומה בין שיניה” (דניאל ז, ה). אמר רבי יוחנן זו חרן הדייב ונציבין, שפעמים בולעתן ופעמים פולטתן.

“And three ribs in its mouth between its teeth” (Dan 7:5).⁷ Said R. Yoḥanan: This is Harran,⁸ Adiabene and Nisibis, which on occasion it swallows and on occasion it spits out.

Generation, eds. Jonathan Kaplan and Robert Williamson, Jr. (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2015), 189–202.

⁷ My translation of the verse here differs from the JPS version.

⁸ This follows the version of MS Genève, Bibliothèque de Genève, Genizah 31v. For the reasons to favor this reading see Geoffrey Herman, “Babylonia of Pure Lineage: Notes on Babylonian Jewish Toponymy,” in *Sources and Interpretation in Ancient Judaism*, ed. Meron Piotrkowsky, Geoffrey Herman, and Saskia Dönitz, AJEC (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 221–22.

In this source, the Palestinian rabbi identifies the bear of Dan 7:5 with contemporary Persia.⁹ The three ribs are thus symbolically located as toponyms within the region that was the heart of ongoing conflict between the two empires. The reference provided, therefore, is specific. Historically, it corresponds reasonably with the geo-political reality that characterized the region described during the *floruit* of R. Yoḥanan, suggesting that it reflects well the period when he lived. One could say that this verse is not being read here apocryptically. The sense is rather of an ongoing conflict between Persia and Rome that is not on the cusp of imminent resolution.¹⁰

With the very real existence of the Persian empire it was clearly not possible to imagine the four kingdoms as advancing in a chronological progression in a manner whereby one was completely replaced by the next. Persia continued to flourish, apparently with the arrival of Greece¹¹ and Rome. And yet, the kingdoms of Babylon and Greece were gone. They must have understood the kingdoms in a dual fashion whereby there were two parallel chronological progressions, one in the East, and the other in the West. Thus, in the East, it is seen as moving from Babylonia to Persia. In the West the transition advanced from Greece to Rome. But what was expected to happen at the very end? As we will see, there was no single answer to this question.

A different impression on the relationship between Rome and Persia, however, is found elsewhere in the Babylonian Talmud. Indeed one notes that the significance of Persia for the Babylonian Talmud in the Jewish eschatological scheme is not really echoed in the Palestinian sources. The explicit question of which empire is superior, Rome or Persia, is addressed more than once in the Babylonian Talmud. Thus, in b. 'Abod. Zar. 2b the two empires appear in judgement before the heavenly court. Rome appears first "since it is more important."¹² In b. Šebu. 6b we find a conversation between Babylonian rabbis

9 This identification is explicit in the statement, attributed to Rav Joseph (b. Meg. 11a; b. 'Abod. Zar. 2b, and b. Yoma 77b), 'אלו פרסיים שאוכלין ושותין כדוב וגו' ("These are the Persians who eat and drink as a bear ..."). On the angel of Persia called "Dubiel," see b. Qidd. 72b, and see further below.

10 This is essentially how the approach of R. Yohanan regarding current events is described in N. N. Glatzer, "The Attitude Towards Rome in Third-Century Judaism," in *Politische Ordnung und Mentlischen Existenz, Festgabe für Eric Vögelin*, ed. Alois Dempf, Hannah Arendt, and Friedrich Engel-Janosi (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1962), 243–57; N. N. Glatzer, *Essays in Jewish Thought* (AL: The University of Alabama Press, 1978) 1–16.

11 It is clear that they perceived the Sasanians as the same as the Persians from the period of the Bible, and not as a new kingdom.

12 The same answer is given there, with the same verse from Daniel. Persia, likened to a bear in Daniel's depiction of the four beasts, comes second. See, too, b. Git. 17a on the deliberation whether Persia is preferable to Rome.

of the mid-fourth century. This follows an earlier attempt to explain the relationship between the signs of biblical leprosy by comparison with the relative hierarchy between government offices, and then between the Persian king and the Roman Caesar. The source is as follows:

אמר ליה רב פפא לרבא: הי מינייהו עדיף אמר ליה בחורשיא קא אכל ליה פוק חזי
 טיבעא דמאן סגי בעלמא דכתיב "ותאכל כל ארעא חתדושנה ותדקנה" [דניאל ז, כג,
 א"ר יוחנן זו רומי חייבת שטיבעה יצא בכל העולם כולו.

Rav Papa said to Rava: Which one is preferable? He answered him: Do you eat in a wood?!¹³ Go out and see whose coinage is current in the world! As it is said: "it will devour the whole earth, tread it down, and crush it" (Dan 7:23). R. Yoḥanan said: This is the sinful Rome whose currency has extended throughout the entire world.

The question, "which is greater?" is answered by a call to observe fiscal reality—the coinage which dominates the world. Such a "trade war" is ultimately linked to a verse taken from Daniel, reminding us to identify the contemporary powers with the allusions in Daniel, as interpreted by the third century Palestinian R. Yoḥanan. The hermeneutic result is achieved by transforming the crushing blow of the hooves of the fourth beast into the hammering of the mint in the production of coinage. While we are dealing with the same scriptural backdrop, and even the same R. Yoḥanan interpreting verses from Daniel as in the previous source, here the conclusion is different! Curiously, we have here the Babylonian Talmud citing a "Roman" rabbi affirming the superiority of Rome over Persia, at least regarding the strength of its currency. Furthermore, the scriptural support summoned here points once again not to an active apocalyptic spirit but to a considerably sublimated version of Daniel's dramatic and violent vision.¹⁴

13 On the various proposals for interpretation of the unusual expression, which I have translated, hesitantly, following Rashi's understanding, "do you eat in the woods," see the detailed discussion in Avram Israel Reisner, "On the Origins of the Sugya. Tractate Shevuot of the Babylonian Talmud—Chapter One" (PhD diss., The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1996), 220–23. See also Michael Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Babylonian Aramaic* (Ramat Gan: Bar Ilan University Press; Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), 212, who offers "perh[aps] place of sore in the eye" and translates the statement: "the place of sore in his eye is irritating him," referencing the explanation of Rav Hai Gaon.

14 This is in striking contrast to their contemporary Persian Christian author, Aphrahat. See T. D. Barnes, "Constantine and the Christians of Persia," *JRS* 75 (1985): 126–36.

3 Rome Is Destined to Fall by the Hand of Persia

The most developed example in the Babylonian Talmud of the juxtaposition of Persia and Rome is a *sugya* in b. Yoma 10a, that I shall first present, and then, discuss in detail:¹⁵

1. ופרסאי מ"ל דמיפת קא אתו דכת' "בני יפת גמר ומגוג ומדי ויון ותובל ומש' ותירס. 16"גמר" זו גרממא, "מגוג" זו גונתיה, "מדי" כמשמעה, "יון" זו מוקדוניה, "תובל" זו בית אוניאקי, "משך" זו מוסיא, "תירס" פליגי בה ר' סימאי ורבנן, ואמרי לה: ר' סימון ורבנן. חד אמ'—זו טרקו; וחד אמ'—זו פרס. תאני רב יוסף: "תירס"—זו פרס...
2. אמ' ר' יהושע בן לוי אמ' רבי: עתידה (פרס) רומי שתיפול ביד פרס, שג' "לכן שמעו עצת יי אשר יעץ על אדום ומחשבותיו אשר חשב על יושבי תימן אם לא יסחבום צעירי הצאן אם לא יאשם עליהם [נויהם].¹⁷
3. מתקיף לה רבא בר עולא: ממאי דהאי "צעירי הצאן" פרס הוא? דכת' "והאיל אשר ראיתי בעל הקרנים מלכי מדי ופרס."¹⁸ אימא יונאי, דכת' "הצפיר והשֶׁ־עיר מלך יון."¹⁹ כי סליק (רי)[ר]בה בר סורמקי, אמרה לשמעתא קמי הווא מרבנן. אמ': מן דלא ידע לפרושי קראי תיובתא מותי ליה לרבי?! מאי "צעירי [שעירי+ונ"א צעירי] הצאן"? זוטא דאחיה. דתאני רב יוסף: "תירס" זו פרס.
4. אמ' רבה בר בר חונה אמ' ר' יונתן משום ר' יהודה בר ר' אלעאי: עתידה רומי שתיפול ביד פרס, קל וחומר ומה מקדש ראשון שבנאוהו בני שם והחריבוהו כשדיים נפלו כשדיים ביד פרסיים; מקדש שני שבנאוהו פרסיים והחריבוהו רומיים לא כל שכן שיפלו רומיים ביד פרסיים?
5. אמ' רבי: עתידה (רומי) פרס שתיפול ביד רומי. אמרי ליה רב כהנא ורב אסי לרב: בנויין ביד סתורי? אמר להו: גזירת מלך היא [איכא ... אמ' להו אינהו נמי קא סתרי בני כנישתא, תניא נמי הכי: עת' פרס שת' ביד רומי. חדא דסתרי בי כניסתא ועוד גזירת מלך וג'] (תניא נמי הכי: עתידה פרס שתיפול ביד רומי גזירת מלך) היא שיפלו בנויין ביד סתורין.

15 Cited here according to New York JTS Rab. 218 (EMC 270). I have added basic punctuation and division into sections. Square brackets indicate a gloss in the manuscript, round brackets indicate a deletion in the manuscript. The Lieberman Institute's Sol and Evelyn Henkind Talmud Text Databank lists a number of textual witnesses for this text, including genizah testimony. The main variations between the manuscript and printed versions for our purposes relate to the text in section 5, as I shall explain. My preference here for this textual witness is in light of the conclusions of Richard Kalmin ("Persian Persecution of the Jews," in *Jewish Babylonia between Persia and Roman Palestine*, ed. Richard Kalmin [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006], 125–27).

16 Gen 10:2.

17 Jer 49:20.

18 Dan 8:20.

19 Dan 8:21.

6. [ואמ' רב יהודה אמ' רב: אין בן דוד בא עד שתפשוט מלכות הרשע' בעולם תשעה חדשים שנ' 'לכן אתנם עד עת יולדה ילדה ויתר אחיו ישובו אל בני ישראל']²⁰

1. ["May God enlarge Japheth, and let him dwell in the tents of Shem" (Gen 9:27) [that means] although "God shall enlarge Japheth", the Divine Presence rests only "in the tents of Shem."] Whence do we know that the Persians are derived from Japheth?—Because it is written: "The sons of Japheth: Gomer, and Magog, and Madai and Javan, and Tubal, and Meshek, and Tiras." "Gomer" is Germania; "Magog" is Konthia; "Madai" in its literal sense; "Javan" is Macedonia; "Tubal" is Beth-Unyaqi;²¹ "Meshek" is Mysia; "Tiras"—its identification is a matter of dispute between R. Simai and the Rabbis, or, according to another report, between R. Simon and the Rabbis, one holding that it is to be identified with Traqu,²² and the other [authorities] declaring it is Persia. Rav Joseph learnt: "Tiras" is Persia ...
2. R. Joshua b. Levi said Rabbi said: Rome (Persia) is destined to fall through the hand of Persia, as it was said: "Hear, then, the plan which the Lord has devised against Edom, and what He has purposed against the inhabitants of Teman: surely the young of the flock²³ shall drag them away, surely their pasture shall be aghast of them." (Jer 49:20).
3. Rabbah b. Ullah demurred to this: What intimation is there that 'the young of the flock' refers to Persia? [Presumably] because it is written [i.e., in Scripture]: "The two-horned ram that you saw [signifies] the kings of Media and Persia." But say [perhaps] it is the Greeks, for it is written, "And the buck, the he-goat—the king of Greece?" When (Ri)[R]aba b. Surmaqi came up [i.e., to Palestine], he reported this interpretation before a certain scholar. He responded: One who does not understand the meaning of the passages of Scripture raises a challenge against Rabbi?! What does, indeed, 'the young of the flock' mean? The youngest of his brethren, for Rav Joseph learnt: Tiras is Persia.

²⁰ Mic 5:2. Although the scriptural citation appears here as a scribal addition, it is included in all the other textual witnesses.

²¹ That is, Bithynia. For this and subsequent identifications below, see Shmuel Krauss, "Die biblische Völkertafel im Talmud, Midrasch und Targum," *MGWJ* 39 (1895): 1–11.

²² That is, Thrace.

²³ My translation of this phrase, "the young of the flock," differs from JPS, to accord better with the exegesis applied to it by the rabbis.

4. Rabbah b. Bar Ḥuna said R. Yohanan said, in the name of R. Judah b. Ilai: Rome is destined to fall into the hands of Persia. That may be concluded by inference *a fortiori*: If in the case of the first Sanctuary, which the sons of Shem built and the Chaldeans destroyed, the Chaldeans fell into the hands of the Persians; then how much more should this be so with the second Sanctuary, which the Persians built and the Romans destroyed, that the Romans should fall into the hands of the Persians.
5. Rav said: Persia (Rome) is destined to fall through the hand of Rome. Rav Kahana and Rav Asi said to Rav: The builders in the hands of the destroyers! He responded to them: Indeed, it is a Divine decree! [There are those ... he said to them, they, too, destroy synagogues.²⁴ We also learn thus, Persia is destined to fall by the hands of Rome, firstly, since they destroy synagogues, and furthermore, it is a Divine decree etc.] (We also learn thus: Persia is destined to fall into the hand of Rome—a Divine decree) is it that the builders should fall into the hands of the destroyers.
6. [And Rav Judah said Rav said: The son of David will not come until the evil Kingdom spreads throughout the entire world for the duration of nine months, as it is said, “Truly He will leave them [helpless] until she who is to bear has borne; then the rest of his countrymen shall return to the children of Israel.” (Mic 5:2)]

My discussion of this passage begins with a structural overview. I have divided the *sugya* into six sections. The first section concerns the comparison between the Jerusalem temple built by Solomon and that built under the auspices of Cyrus. A scriptural verse is interpreted to indicate the inferiority of the latter. Thus, the temple constructed by “Japheth,” understood as a reference to the Persians, is inferior to the one constructed by “Shem,” taken as referring to the Jews.²⁵ The association of Japheth with Persia is demonstrated scripturally, drawing support from the statement of the fourth century Babylonian rabbi, Rav Joseph. Although, this scriptural identification had been disputed in an earlier tradition that is cited. Now follows, *ad loco*, a detailed commentary on the table of nations from Genesis, only a small part of which I have deemed necessary to reproduce here. What I wish to note is that the identification of

²⁴ בתי בני־שֵׁתָא Read בני־כְּנִישָׁתָא.

²⁵ Hence, Cyrus's achievement is belittled, as is the entire Second Temple period. On this trend more broadly, as reflected in rabbinic literature, see Meir Ben Shajar, “The Restoration in Rabbinic Literature: Palestine and Babylonia from Past to Present,” *Zion* 79 (2014): 19–51 (Hebrew).

the biblical nations and toponyms in the list would seem to reflect Babylonian rather than Roman traditions in many cases.

The second section transmits a declaration in the name of Palestinian rabbi, R. Joshua b. Levi in the name of Rabbi (Judah 1), that Rome will be defeated by Persia, supported by the proof text from Jer 49:20.

The validity of this claim is the focus of the third section. First, it is challenged by the Babylonian Rava bar Ullah. He believes this interpretation is based upon assuming the “young of the flock” are Persia, as in Dan 8:20 but suggests that “young of the flock” might actually be a reference to *Greece* on the basis of Dan 8:21. The error of this interpretation is dramatized with a tale of a Babylonian rabbi, R. Raba b. Surmaqi,²⁶ who went to Palestine and proposed this interpretation to a local Palestinian rabbi. He is rebutted forcefully with the assertion that he is ignorant of scriptural interpretation. The reference is to the youngest *brother*, that is the youngest son of the youngest of the three sons of Noah, who is understood to be Tiras. This is said to be Persia, as we have seen already, as taught by Rav Joseph.

The fourth section argues that Rome will be defeated by Persia on the basis of an *a fortiori* hermeneutical rule of logic and reference to the two temples. It evokes the Chasdim as well as Rome and Persia. This argument is transmitted through a chain of transmission that goes back to the tanna, R. Judah b. Ilai.²⁷

The fifth section in the name of Rav, however, argues contrarily that Persia will be defeated by Rome. This statement is challenged by Rav’s students, with an argument of logic, but rebutted with the “historiosophical”²⁸ response that such is a divine decree. A final note, an alternative answer, claiming that

26 This is the name according to this textual witness and JTS Rab 1623/2 (EMC 271). The others have “Haviva” (חַבִּיבָא) or minor variations of it. E.g., MS Oxford Opp. Add. 23: “Haviv bar Sumaqi” (חַבִּיב בַּר סוּמָקִי); and MS Munich 95 adds to the name the alliteration, “from Damascus” (מִדּוֹרְמִסְקִי). This rabbinic name is mentioned only infrequently in the Babylonian Talmud. The mention in b. Meṣ. 85b relates to the mystical. There is also uncertainty regarding his *floruit*. See Ch. Albeck, *Introduction to the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi*, 3rd ed. (Tel-Aviv: Dvir Publishing House, 1987), 614 (Hebrew).

27 On the attitude of this tanna to Rome, see the discussion in Israel Ben-Shalom, “Rabbi Judah B. Ilai’s Attitude towards Rome,” *Zion* 49 (1984): 9–24, esp. 17 (Hebrew). Ben-Shalom argues there convincingly that the enthusiastic view of Rome, expressed by this rabbi in a source brought in b. Šabb. 33a, is not an authentic reflection of the attitude of this rabbi, or, in fact, of any rabbi from the period immediately following the Bar-Kokhba rebellion. The tradition here, then, that attributes to R. Judah b. Ilai a prediction of Rome’s defeat is not surprising. However, Rabbi Judah 1 also predicts the fall of Rome here. Ben-Shalom’s (“Rabbi Judah B. Ilai,” 17, n. 40) efforts to explain this approach *despite* the positive political conditions between the Jews and Rome at this time is a little weaker.

28 Cf. E. S. Rosenthal, “For the Talmudic Dictionary—*Talmudica Iranica*,” in *Irano-Judaica, Studies Relating to Jewish Contacts with Persian Culture Throughout the Ages*, ed. Shaul Shaked (Jerusalem: Ben-Zvi Institute, 1982), 63.

the Persians too are guilty since they destroy synagogues, seems to have been added to the Talmud discussion at a later time. It appears in this Talmud manuscript as a marginal gloss by another hand. Eliezer Shimson Rosenthal, as part of his own thesis, emphasized the ambiguity of this section of the tradition and its questionable association with Rav. Richard Kalmin, more recently, has argued convincingly against seeing this comment as part of the original text.²⁹ Finally, this position regarding Rome and Persia is affirmed through the citation of another tradition in the name of Rav, understood to indicate that Rome will defeat Persia.

Taken together, we have a chiasmic structure in the presentation of the positions: the assertion that Rome will be defeated is supported first by Scripture, and then with a logical argument. The assertion that Persia will be defeated is challenged by a logical inference and then affirmed by Scripture. The penultimate argument on the destroyers and builders of the temple returns us, thematically, to the opening statement which compared the builders of the two temples.

In view of the themes dealt with in this Talmudic source, and in particular, the attitudes towards Rome expressed here, the scholarly discussion on this *sugya* has been intense, with contributions by a number of historians of Talmudic literature, including: Jacob Neusner, Moshe Beer, E. S. Rosenthal, Isaiah Gafni, and recently, Richard Kalmin and Ron Naiweld, among others.³⁰

29 We would then apparently have a *baraita* that offers both the reasons just presented as arguments why Persia will fall to Rome with a scriptural support.

30 Jacob Neusner does not analyse this passage in detail, but see, for example, J. Neusner, *A History of the Jews in Babylonia: II. The Early Sassanian Period* (Leiden: Brill, 1966), 44; Rosenthal, "For the Talmudic Dictionary—*Talmudica Iranica*," 63–64; Moshe Beer, "The Political Background of Rav's Activities in Babylonia," *Zion* 50 (1985): 160; M. Beer, *The Sages of the Mishnah and the Talmud, Teachings, Activities and Leadership* (Ramat-Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 2011), 15; Isaiah M. Gafni, *The Jews of Babylonia in the Talmudic Era: A Social and Cultural History* (Jerusalem: Zalman Shazar Center for Jewish History, 1990), 39–40; Isaiah M. Gafni, "Rabbinic Historiography and Representations of the Past," in *The Talmud and Rabbinic Literature*, ed. Charlotte Elisheva Fonrobert and Martin S. Jaffee, CCR (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 297 (= Isaiah M. Gafni, *Jews and Judaism in the Rabbinic Era: Image and Reality—History and Historiography*, TSAJ 173 [Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2019,] 45); Kalmin, "Persian Persecution of the Jews," 121–47, esp. 122–27; and, for the first part of this source, Jason Sion Mokhtarian, *Rabbis, Sorcerers, Kings, and Priests: The Culture of the Talmud in Ancient Iran* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2015), 68–69. See also A. H. Cutler, "Third-Century Palestinian Rabbinic Attitudes towards the Prospect of the Fall of Rome," *JSS* 3 (1969): 275–85; N. N. Glatzer, "The Attitude Towards Rome," 243–257; N. N. Glatzer, *Essays in Jewish Thought* (Tuscaloosa, AL: The University of Alabama Press, 1978), 1–16; Meir Ben Shazar, "Biblical and Post-Biblical History in Rabbinic Literature: Between the First and Second Destruction" (PhD diss., Hebrew University, 2011), 245; and the most recent exploration of this *sugya* by Ron

Earlier studies sought to interpret this *sugya* in light of historical events and the experience of the Jews, either in Judaea or in Babylonia, under the Romans and Persians in the course of the first century of Sasanian rule. Kalmin dealt with this source in a recent study of the question of Persian persecution of the Jews under the early Sasanians. Highlighting the exegetical component, Kalmin argued that this element was not a response to current events or aspirations. In this, Kalmin's focus was on the latter part of this *sugya*.

What I wish to point out here, that I believe has not been addressed by earlier scholars, is the lack of correlation between what this source attributes to Palestinian rabbis, and what Palestinian rabbis are actually found saying in some rabbinic sources of Palestinian provenance.

The position that Rome will be defeated, although advanced as Palestinian, actually hinges on two points of exegesis that are vigorously associated with *Babylonian* interpretative preferences. Firstly, the association of Japheth with Persia, through Tiras, is Rav Joseph's statement. We also find it attested in Palestinian rabbinic sources, but there only as the minority opinion. Thus, in *y. Meg. I 71b*: "and Tiras"—Rabbi Simeon says: Persia; but the Rabbis say: *Thrace*.³¹ The preference for Thrace is also the view of both Josephus and Eusebius.³²

The Babylonian Talmud, as we saw, does record this dispute. It recognizes that there is more than one opinion on the identification of Tiras; however, it does not know which view is held by the Palestinian rabbis as the majority view. Furthermore, despite this uncertainty, it does not treat seriously the other opinion against identifying Tiras with Persia but accepts Rav Joseph's statement concerning Tiras.

Secondly, the Babylonian Talmud tells us that the prediction that Rome will fall to Persia is the view of the Palestinian Judah 1, *Rabbi*, on the basis of the interpretation of the verse from *Jer 49:20*. *Palestinian* sources, however, understand this verse quite differently. *Genesis Rabbah* interprets this same verse to mean the youngest of *tribes* refers to the tribe of *Benjamin*.³³ One must

Naiweld, "The Use of Rabbinic Traditions about Rome in the Babylonian Talmud," *RHR* 233 (2016): 255–85, esp. 264–71.

31 ותירס ר' סימון אמר פרס ורבנן אמרי תרקא. *Genesis Rabbah* has essentially the same text (Theodor-Albeck edition, 343): ותירס ר' סימון אמר פרס רבנין אמ' ותרקי.

32 Shmuel Krauss, "Die biblische Völkertafel im Talmud," 11.

33 Theodor-Albeck, 851, 884: והיה כאשר ילדה רחל את יוסף וגו' כיון שנולד סטנו שלעשו ויאמר: יעקב אל לבן שלחני ואלכה אל מקומי ולארצי דאמר ר' פינחס בשם ר' שמואל בר נחמן מסורת היא שאין עשו נופל אלא ביד בני בניה שלרחל הה"ד אם לא יסחבום צעירי הצאן ולמה קוראם צעירי הצאן הן צעירים שלשבטים. עם לבן גרתי ... ולמה ואחר עד עתה שעדיין לא נולד שטנו שלעשו דאמר ר' פינחס מש' ר' שמואל בר נחמן מסורת היא שאין עשי נופל אלא ביד בני בניה שלרחל הה"ד אם לא יסחבום צעירי הצאן צעירי שבטים

conclude, therefore, that the talmud receives a tradition that speaks of the youngest of “brothers.” These “brothers” were read in the Palestinian exegetical tradition as a reference to the sons of Jacob, the tribes of Israel, but the Talmud (re-)interprets it as the youngest of the brothers who are the sons of Japheth, understood as Tiras, in turn taken as a reference to Persia. So where Palestinian rabbinic tradition imagines a final conflict between Rome and a Jewish leader from the tribe of *Benjamin*, the Babylonian rabbinic tradition sees a conflict between Rome and Persia.

This leads to a further noteworthy point. While this *sugya* is depicted as a contrast between Palestinian and Babylonian rabbinic opinion, what we see in reality is a divergence of opinion between two major rabbinic centers: Pumbedita and Sura. The first part, supporting the defeat of Rome is dependent upon the exegesis of Rav Joseph, the head of Pumbedita. The second part, supporting the defeat of Persia is explicitly in the name of the founder of the Suran rabbinic academy, Rav. This presentation of the views would seem to be a step belonging to the redactional stage of the Talmud. The question is whether or not we wish to date the individual components within this *sugya* to when the Rabbis named are believed to have lived.

4 Conclusion

While in Palestine the focus is on the four kingdoms as a broad idea the emphasis in Babylonia is more on the ultimate conflict between Rome and Persia and the comparison between the two. Persia has a more central role. Its conflict with Rome is treated as the penultimate stage in the four kingdoms.

The dispute presented in the Babylonian Talmud concerning whether Persia will defeat Rome or vice versa has often been treated as an expression of response to historical developments. It has been perceived as reflective of the concerns of either the Jews of Babylonia or of Palestine. In its current redacted state it would ultimately appear to be an internal dispute among Babylonian Rabbis.

The difference in opinion reflects the two rabbinic schools of Babylonia: Pumbedita in the north and Sura in the south. This is evident in both their

Translation: “And it was when Rachel begat Joseph etc.” Once the adversary of Esau was born “and Jacob said to Laban: send me away and I shall go to my place and to my land.” Since R. Pinhas said in the name of R. Samuel bar Nahman: It is a tradition that Esau will not fall except through the hand of the sons of the son of Rachel. As it is written: “The young of the flock will drag them away”—and why are they called “the young of the flock”—they are the youngest of the tribes. “With Laban I dwelled ...”

traditions and outlooks. The view that Persia will defeat Rome is supported by Pumbeditan Babylonian exegetical traditions and alleges support from traditions from Palestine. The opinion that Rome will defeat Persia, asserted by rabbis of Suran provenance, is also the dominant view expressed in the Talmud's editorial layer.

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The Four Kingdoms of Daniel in the Early Mediaeval Apocalyptic Tradition

Lorenzo DiTommaso

1 Introduction*

The four kingdom schema is a historiographic framework that divides the last phase of human history into four periods, each period ruled in turn by a dominant power or world-empire. Although it originated in classical antiquity,¹ the schema received its enduring formulation in chapters 2 and 7 of the biblical book of Daniel, where it acquired an apocalyptic valence.² There the schema is presented in the form of heavenly revelation,³ which gave it a predetermined dimension.⁴ Both chapters expect the fourth kingdom to be overthrown by the eschatological kingdom of God, thus terminating the sequence.⁵

The four kingdoms are never named but instead are identified symbolically.⁶ In chapter 2, King Nebuchadnezzar dreams of a giant statue that is composed

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- 1 Joseph Ward Swain, “The Theory of the Four Monarchies: Opposition History under the Roman Empire,” *CP* 25 (1940): 1–21; and Samuel K. Eddy, *The King is Dead: Studies in the Near Eastern Resistance to Hellenism 334–31 BC* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1961). On the construction of time and history in the Seleucid era, see now Paul J. Kosmin, *Time and Its Adversaries in the Seleucid Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2019).
- 2 On the apocalyptic understanding of history, see Lorenzo DiTommaso, “History and Apocalyptic Eschatology: A Reply to J. Y. Jindo,” *VT* 56 (2006): 413–18; and Lorenzo DiTommaso, “Apocalyptic Historiography,” *EC* 10 (2019): 435–60.
- 3 Cf. also Dan 8:8.
- 4 The classic study of the four kingdom schema in Daniel remains Reinhard G. Kratz, *Translatio imperii: Untersuchungen zu den aramäischen Danielzählungen und ihrem theologiegeschichtlichen Umfeld*, *WMANT* 63 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1991). Dated but still valuable is David Flusser, “The Four Empires in the Fourth Sibyl and the Book of Daniel,” *IOS* 2 (1972): 148–75.
- 5 The imminence of this event is a logical corollary of the underlying apocalyptic worldview and necessary to its social functions. In the case of the revelatory visions of MT Daniel 7–12, the imminence of the end is implicit in chapter 9 and explicit in the “countdown” dates of Dan 7:25; 8:14; 12:11; and 12:12.
- 6 The exception is Dan 2:37–38, where Daniel explains to Nebuchadnezzar, “You, O king ... you are the head of gold” (NRSV). In its present context in the MT book, the reference is to

of four metals of descending value, gold, silver, bronze, and iron. In chapter 7, Daniel is shown a vision of the four hybrid-beasts that crawl out of the sea, one after the other. The fourth beast is the most terrible of all and has iron teeth.

The ambiguity of the images was critical to the schema's enduring significance, since it allowed for later interpretations in light of new circumstances. The cardinal issue was the identity of the fourth and final world-kingdom. Its overthrow represents the turning-point in the divine plan for history that was approaching its foreordained culmination. Equating the fourth kingdom with a present-day kingdom or state enabled a group to locate itself within the sequence of this history, thus placing it on the cusp of salvation.⁷

The book of Daniel attained its final Masoretic form towards the end of the Maccabean Revolt of 167–164 BCE. Its simplified view of the conflict, coded by its symbolic imagery, pit traditionalist Jews against their Seleucid (Hellenistic Greek) overlords, whose monarch, Antiochus IV Epiphanes, had desecrated the Jerusalem Temple. For the intended audience of the book, the fourth and final kingdom was the oppressive Seleucid Empire. This identification is reinforced elsewhere by allusions to the hated Antiochus,⁸ including a skeleton version of the schema in chapter 8 (in which all the kingdoms but the first are named)⁹ and the introduction of a different schema of “seventy weeks” in chapter 9.¹⁰

Antiochus perished and his kingdom was overthrown, though not as the book of Daniel had predicted.¹¹ Over the next 150 years, the Seleucid Empire and the other Hellenistic states fell to Rome like dominoes. Even to its contemporary chroniclers, Rome's rise to supreme world power seemed to have

Nebuchadnezzar's (neo-Babylonian) kingdom, rather than to the king personally. See also “Conclusions” below.

7 On the dynamics of historical periodization, see M. D. Goulder, “The Phasing of the Future,” in *Texts and Contexts: Biblical Texts in Their Textual and Situational Contexts: Essays in Honor of Lars Hartman*, ed. Tord Fornberg and David Hellholm (Oslo: Scandinavian University Press, 1995), 391–408; Piero Capelli, “Periodizzazioni del tempo: la soluzione apocalittica,” *RSE* 9 (1997): 193–214; John J. Collins, *Apocalypticism in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (London: Routledge, 1997), 52–70; and Michael E. Stone, *Ancient Judaism: New Visions and Views* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011), 59–89.

8 Cf. Dan 7:8, 24b–26; 8:9–12, 23–25; 9:26–27; and 11:21–39.

9 Dan 8:20–21a: “As for the ram that you saw with the two horns, these are the kings of Media and Persia. The male goat is the king of Greece ...” (NRSV).

10 Cana Werman, “Epochs and End-Time: The 490-Year Scheme in Second Temple Literature,” *DSD* 13 (2006): 229–55.

11 Dan 11:40–45 incorrectly foretells the manner of Antiochus's death. For this reason it should be regarded as a genuine prediction rather than an *ex eventu* prophecy.

been foreordained.¹² By the second century CE, Rome had become the “empire without end” (*imperium sine fine*), extending from Mesopotamia in the East to the Pillars of Hercules in the West.

For the Jews and the Christians of the era,¹³ the final kingdom¹⁴ was no longer the “Greece” of the intended audience of Daniel and the other early apocalypses, but world-spanning Rome.¹⁵ This identification remained consistent throughout the late-antique period in both rabbinic Judaism and patristic Christianity. In the latter, it found its classic expression in Jerome’s commentary on Daniel.¹⁶

The sack of Rome in 410 CE and the withdrawal of Imperial authority in the West mark the gradual transition to the mediaeval centuries but a sharp turning-point in the history of apocalyptic speculation. This paper examines the four kingdom schema of Daniel in the early mediaeval writings, from the

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- 12 Polybius’s *Histories*, written in the late 140s or 130s BCE, stresses the role of fate in Rome’s rise to power.
- 13 The identification of the fourth empire with Rome does not predate the first century BCE; see Doron Mendels, “The Five Empires: A Note on a Propagandistic Topos,” *AJP* 102 (1981): 330–37.
- 14 In most renditions, Rome replaces Greece as the new fourth (and final) empire, with Greece shifted back one position to the third empire. Rome is sometimes added to the schema, becoming the fifth (and final) empire. On the “fifth empire” *topos* generally, see Maria Ana Travassos Valdez, *Historical Interpretations of the “Fifth Empire”: The Dynamics of Periodization from Daniel to António Vieira, S.J.*, SHCT 149 (Leiden: Brill, 2010).
- 15 The *loci classici* here are the “Eagle Vision” of 4 Ezra 11–12 and Josephus, *Ant.* In the former, Ezra the seer is shown a vision of a great eagle, with three heads and multiple wings, which is identified as the fourth and final world-kingdom (11:39–40). The eagle, of course, is symbolic of Imperial Rome, and hence refers to the “new” final kingdom. The interpreting angel clarifies the exegetical update for the seer (and its intended audience): “This is the interpretation of this vision that you have seen: The eagle that you saw coming up from the sea is the fourth kingdom that appeared in a vision to your brother Daniel. But *it was not explained to him as I now explain to you or have explained it*” (12:10–12 NRSV, my italics). On Daniel in Josephus, see Steve Mason, “Josephus, Daniel, and the Flavian House,” in *Josephus and the History of the Greco-Roman Period: Essays in Memory of Morton Smith*, ed. Fausto Parente and Joseph Sievers, SPB 41 (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 161–91.
- 16 Franciscus Glorie, ed., *Commentariorum in Daniele libri III*, CCSA 75A (Turnhout: Brepols, 1964), q.v. 2:40 and 7:7. See Régis Courtray, “Der Danielkommentar des Hieronymus,” in *Die Geschichte der Daniel-Auslegung in Judentum, Christentum und Islam*, ed. Katharina Bracht and David S. Du Toit, BZAW 371 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2007), 123–50, esp. 140–44; and Régis Courtray, *Prophète des temps derniers: Jérôme commente Daniel*, TH 119 (Paris: Beauchesne, 2009), q.v. the same passages. On 7:7, see Jay Braverman, *Jerome’s Commentary on Daniel: A Study of Comparative Jewish and Christian Interpretations of the Hebrew Bible*, CBQMS 7 (Washington, DC: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1978), 90–94. Minority versions persisted throughout antiquity, including the view that the fourth kingdom still referred to the “Greeks.”

fifth to the twelfth centuries.¹⁷ Several reasons suggest terminating our investigation at that point in time, as we shall see.

2 The Common Mediaeval Apocalyptic Tradition

The history of apocalyptic speculation can be divided into six periods: early, late-antique, mediaeval, early-modern, modern, and contemporary.¹⁸ These periods do not precisely correlate to historical eras. While the end of late antiquity is often pegged to the rise of Islam in the seventh century, late-antique apocalypticism actually disappeared in the late fourth and fifth centuries. In its place arose a new, *mediaeval* mode of apocalyptic speculation. This new mode differed radically from the late-antique variety that preceded it, and remained dominant throughout the “mediaeval millennium,” which lasted approximately from the fifth to the fifteenth centuries.

It is easy to slip into generalities when outlining an apocalyptic tradition that extends over a thousand years and encompasses so many regional ecologies. Sassanid Syria is not Merovingian Gaul, and neither is ninth-century Byzantium or fifteenth-century Florence, and the apocalyptic tradition in each setting is distinctive. Apocalyptic speculation has social functions that are geared to the specific groups to which the texts are intended, and the concerns and needs of these audiences differed.

Underpinning this diversity, however, is a similarity that expresses itself in structure, content, and social function. This similarity is so global in its scope and so pervasive across the full range of the evidence, that one can identify a

17 Brennan W. Breed, “History of Reception,” in *Daniel: A Commentary* by Carol A. Newsom with Brennan W. Breed, OTL (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2014), 85–97, is the best overview of the subject. The unpublished dissertation of Janet L. R. Melnyk (“The Four Kingdoms in Daniel 2 and 7: Chapters in the History of Interpretation,” [PhD diss., Emory University, 2001]) jumps from Jerome to Joachim and thus skips the early mediaeval era. The PhD dissertation by E. J. J. Kocken, published as *De Theorie van der vier Wereldrijken en van de Overdracht der Wereldheerschappij tot op Innocentius III* (Nijmegen: Berkhout, 1935), remains a fine source-book, as does, more generally, Bernard McGinn, *Visions of the End: Apocalyptic Traditions in the Middle Ages*, rev. ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998).

18 On the history of apocalypticism, its periods, and the contemporary “apocalyptic shift,” see Lorenzo DiTommaso, “Apocalypticism in the Contemporary World,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Apocalyptic Literature*, ed. Colin McAllister (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 316–42.

common mediaeval apocalyptic tradition.¹⁹ In brief, this tradition is described by a suite of five characteristics:

- (1) Its “global” geographic scope. The mediaeval apocalyptic tradition was universal in its compass, ranging across the Byzantine and Islamic worlds in the East and all points of the mediaeval West. From Ireland to Armenia, nothing “apocalyptic” was external to this geography, just as there was no regional or religious ecology that was isolated and different from the common tradition.²⁰
- (2) Its historical-eschatological tenor. There are two types of apocalyptic speculation, “historical” and “otherworldly.”²¹ Mediaeval apocalyptic speculation *tout court* is of the historical-eschatological type, and almost exclusively so, in sharp contrast to the apocalyptic writings of the late-antique period that preceded it. The preponderance is all the more striking when we recall that we are dealing with literally thousands of mediaeval Christian, Jewish, and Islamic apocalyptic texts, tracts, testaments, commentaries, oracles, prophecies, homilies, and other literary genres.
- (3) Its re-combinatory compositional process. Mediaeval apocalyptic works typically display a high degree of literary variation in the manuscripts. This variation expresses itself as multiple textual versions or states. The motivation for change is adaptation to local conditions. Its mechanism is the recycling of older material, often in the form of discrete blocks or oracles. The result is the constant creation of new texts (*viz.*, expressions of the same literary work), either in stand-alone form or embedded in other works.
- (4) Its distinctive eschatological narrative. Mediaeval apocalyptic speculation features a suite of eschatological expectations that either have their origins in the early mediaeval apocalyptic tradition or else attained their

19 Lorenzo DiTommaso, “Apocryphal Daniel Apocalypses: Works, Manuscripts, and Overview,” *ETL* 94 (2018): 275–316 at 310–12. For a full presentation, see Lorenzo DiTommaso, “The Common Medieval Apocalyptic Tradition,” in *The Mediaeval Apocalyptic Tradition: From the Twilight of the Roman Empire to the Dawn of Early Modern Europe*, ed. Lorenzo DiTommaso and Colin McAllister (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press [forthcoming]).

20 The antiquity of Zoroastrian eschatology remains a controversial topic among authorities. In the present author’s view, the eschatology that is preserved in the mediaeval Iranian texts is closer to that of the common mediaeval apocalyptic tradition than the Second-Temple Jewish apocalypses.

21 John J. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination: An Introduction to Jewish Apocalyptic Literature*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016), 7–8. See further, Lorenzo DiTommaso, “‘Revealed Things’ in Apocalyptic Literature,” in *Re-Imagining Apocalypticism: Apocalypses, Apocalyptic Literature, and the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. Lorenzo DiTommaso and Matthew J. Goff, EJM (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2021 [forthcoming]).

full development during this time. In addition, these expectations were sequenced in the mediaeval eschatological narrative by means of new periodizing schemata. These schemata, which are central to the subject of this paper, are discussed in the following sections.

- (5) Its boundary-crossing ability. The basic homogeneity of the apocalyptic tradition described above translates in social terms to the ability of apocalyptic themes, oracles, and tropes during this period to transcend nearly every boundary—religious, sectarian, linguistic, social, and geographic. Mediaeval apocalyptic speculation was at once Christian, Jewish, and Islamic. It was both high culture and low literature. It appealed to the stakeholder elements and the marginal, and in both secular and spiritual circles. It was deployed by different sides in the same struggle, and for identical reasons. It described both the enemy outside the walls and the enemy within them. And it was used, re-used, and used again, in a tremendous variety of social settings.

Together these five characteristics describe a distinctive type of apocalyptic speculation that was commonplace throughout the mediaeval millennium, and in a profound and meaningful way that transcended region, language, culture, religion, and social class. This speculation was expressed in three main ways. The categorization is primarily organizational, but it is grounded in literary realities:

- (1) Stand-alone apocalyptic works. Over 500 such writings are extant. Some stand-alone works are long, extending to ten, twenty, and even thirty pages in a modern book. Others, consisting of only a few oracular stanzas, are shorter. Perhaps two dozen stand-alone works are formal apocalypses, according to the best definition of the genre. The majority are compositionally simpler, such as apocalyptic oracles or prophecies. Related works associated with a specific figure, such as Ezra, the Sibyls, Leo the Wise, and especially Daniel, are common. Such “clusters” denote a measure of literary stability over time, although these elements are subordinate to the re-combinatory compositional process outlined above and regulated by the structure of the mediaeval eschatological narrative. Stand-alone predictions are robustly apocalyptic by nature, in that their primary purposes derive from their revelatory-predictive function and are not subordinate to other functions.
- (2) Works that are not stand-alone prophecies, yet are informed by the mediaeval apocalyptic tradition to an equivalently robust degree. These writings typically are more contemplative and compositionally sophisticated than the stand-alone predictions. Their apocalyptic tenor ranges from *forte* to *piano*. At the *forte* end of the spectrum are works whose

primary purposes are informed by their apocalyptic tenor. These include commentaries on the prophetic and apocalyptic books of the Bible, as well as homilies, liturgical works, dramas, lists, and, above all, tractates on the end-time. Examples of the last type include the *Prognosticum futuri saeculi* of Julian of Toledo and *De Antichristo* of Adso Dervensis (Adso de Montier-en-Der). At the *piano* end are works that similarly are informed by the apocalyptic worldview and oriented by its eschatological horizon yet explore the human condition and are not primarily defined by its revelatory-predictive functions. Augustine's *City of God*, Dante's *Divine Comedy*, and Langland's *Piers Plowman* are prime examples of the type.²²

- (3) Apocalyptic texts and traditions, typically short in length, which are embedded in non-apocalyptic texts, or appear as marginal or intra-linear notes in manuscript folia containing other writings. To this (very) arbitrary collocation of items, one may add non-literary media, such as manuscript illumination, as well as in other graphic forms, ranging from stained glass to fresco to porcelain, even though the majority of these items are late mediaeval in vintage.

All three kinds of material were generated in light of sacred Scripture and occasionally in addition to it. In the mediaeval Christian mentality, "Scripture" meant the Old and the New Testaments, considered holistically, comprehended apocalyptically, and embroidered with extra-canonical texts and traditions. "History" was the story of salvation. It commenced with one creation and culminated with another. Its last phase could be sequenced by the two Danielic schemata (the four empires and the seventy weeks), the three-headed eagle of 4 Ezra,²³ and/or the thousand-year "millennium" of the Revelation of John. The course of human events within this story was channeled, oriented, and given its ultimate coherence by an eschatological narrative that was oriented by the expected second coming of Jesus Christ.

This eschatological narrative, established by the close of the New Testament era, remained relatively static in the late-antique Christianity.²⁴ Although the

22 Kathryn Kerby-Felton, *Reformist Apocalypticism and Piers Plowman* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), and Claudia Rattazzi Papka, "The Limits of Apocalypse: Eschatology, Epistemology, and Textuality in the *Commedia* and *Piers Plowman*," in *Last Things: Death and the Apocalypse in the Middle Ages*, ed. Caroline Walker Bynum and Paul Freedman (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania University Press, 2000), 233–56 and 351–55.

23 See above, n. 15.

24 The same was true, *mutatis mutandis*, in Rabbinic Judaism during the same centuries. See Obed Irshai, "Dating the Eschaton: Jewish and Christian Apocalyptic Calculations in Late Antiquity," in *Apocalyptic Time*, ed. Albert I. Baumgarten, *NUMEN* 86 (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 113–53; Uwe Glessmer, "Die 'vier Reiche' aus Daniel in der targumischen Literatur," in *The Book of Daniel: Composition and Reception*, ed. John J. Collins and Peter W. Flint,

Devil, the Antichrist, and other figures were fleshed out towards what would become their familiar, three-dimensional forms, nothing strikingly new was added to the basic pattern. The general impulse was to expand or refine figures and tropes, and to redeploy the biblical schemata as required.²⁵ This usually took place in the patristic writings, and was prompted by reflections on theodicy and evil,²⁶ as opposed to the stand-alone apocalypses of the time (such as the Apocalypse of Paul), which were concerned more with the fate of the soul after death and the nature and inhabitants of the heavenly and infernal realms.

A new eschatological narrative, however, emerged at the close of the late antique period and into the early mediaeval centuries.²⁷ Some of the key early texts here are the Sibilla Tiburtina, the Seventh Vision of Daniel, and, above all, the Apocalypse (or Revelations)²⁸ of Pseudo-Methodius. The new narrative was anchored by the figure of the Antichrist,²⁹ around whom a comprehensive

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- VTSup 83, FIOTL 2, (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 2:468–98; Lawrence H. Schiffman, “Messianism and Apocalypticism in Rabbinic Texts,” in *The Cambridge History of Judaism: Vol. IV: The Late Roman-Rabbinic Period*, ed. Steven T. Katz (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 1053–72; and Geoffrey Herman’s contribution to the present volume. On late-antique apocalypticism overall, see Lorenzo DiTommaso, “Il genere ‘apocalisse’ e l’‘apocalittico’ nella tarda antichità,” *Rivista di storia del cristianesimo* (forthcoming 2020).
- 25 On the Christian redeployment of the schema of Daniel 9, see William A. Adler, “The Apocalyptic Survey of History Adapted by Christians: Daniel’s Prophecy of 70 Weeks,” in *The Jewish Apocalyptic Heritage in Early Christianity*, ed. James C. VanderKam and William A. Adler, CRINT 3.4 (Assen: Van Gorcum; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), 201–38.
- 26 Jeffrey Burton Russell, *The Prince of Darkness: Radical Evil and the Power of Good in History* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), 56–81 and 93–110; and Brian E. Daley, *The Hope of the Early Church: A Handbook of Patristic Eschatology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), passim.
- 27 On the broader social and political contexts, see James T. Palmer, *The Apocalypse in the Early Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).
- 28 Although “Apocalypse” is used in this article, the “Revelations” of Pseudo-Methodius is a better title, since the work is not an apocalypse proper, nor does it call itself one. It is an apocalyptic revelation about history and its end. The Syriac title is *Mēmra Composed by the Blessed bar Methodius, Bishop and Martyr, on the Succession of Kings and the End of Time*. *Mēmra* here means “homily” or “discourse.” The titles of the work vary among the Greek and Latin manuscripts.
- 29 The literature on the mediaeval Antichrist is immense. Seminal works include Wilhelm Bousset, *Der Antichrist in der Überlieferung des Judentums, des Neuen Testaments und der alten Kirche* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1895); Horst D. Rauh, *Das Bild des Antichrist im Mittelalter: Vom Tyconius zum deutschen Symbolismus*, BGPTM (Münster: Aschendorff, 1973); Richard K. Emmerson, *Antichrist in the Middle Ages: A Study of Medieval Apocalypticism, Art, and Literature* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1981); Bernard McGinn, *Antichrist: Two Thousand Years of the Human Fascination with Evil* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1993); Roberto Rusconi, “Antichrist and Antichrists,”

biography gradually developed, including details about his birth, physical features, and activities in the eschatological age. Also prominent were the expectations for a Last Roman Emperor,³⁰ the opening of the Gates of the North and the release of the hordes of Gog and Magog,³¹ and a set series of tribulations and natural disasters that would herald the Last Judgment. These and other expectations were sequenced in the narrative by means of novel periodizing schemata. Most important was the division of history into seven millennia, as in the Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius.

This new eschatological narrative is a hallmark feature of the common mediaeval apocalyptic tradition. How, then, was world-history construed within the early part of this tradition, particularly in its schematic periodization, and specifically with reference to the older, four kingdom schema? Was the schema relegated to the fringes of mediaeval historiography, as a subsidiary trope among these new eschatological expectations, or perhaps relevant only in regional ecologies that were located on the centrifugal edges of the old Empire? Or did the schema remain a core component of the mediaeval interpretation of the meaning of history and its end—recycled time and again to fit changing situations?

The evidence suggests a range of answers between these extremes. A full survey of the subject is beyond the remit of an article-length study. Instead, we shall concentrate on three cases that illustrate different ways in which the schema fit into the early mediaeval apocalyptic tradition: (i) the apocryphal Daniel apocalypses, with attention to the Syriac apocalypsa of the seventh and eighth centuries; (ii) the Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius and the 7000-year schema; and (iii) the historiographic construct of *translatio imperii* in its Western expressions from the eighth through the twelfth centuries. These case-studies also shed light on the schema's two main social functions in its early-mediaeval contexts.

in *The Encyclopedia of Apocalypticism: Volume 2: Apocalypticism in Western History and Culture*, ed. Bernard McGinn (New York: Continuum, 1998), 287–325; Mariano Delgado and Volker Leppin, eds., *Der Antichrist: Historische und systematische Zugänge* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2011); and Lutz Greisiger, *Messias-Endkaiser-Antichrist: Politische Apokalypstik unter Juden und Christen des Nahen Ostens am Vorabend der arabischen Eroberung*, OBC 21 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2014).

30 Hannes Möhring, *Der Weltkaiser der Endzeit*, MF 3 (Stuttgart: Thorbecke, 2000); András Kraft, "The Last Roman Emperor *Topos* in the Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition," *Byzantion* 82 (2012): 213–57; and Greisiger, *Messias-Endkaiser-Antichrist*.

31 Emeri van Donzel and Andrea Schmidt, *Gog and Magog in Early Eastern Christian and Islamic Sources* (Leiden: Brill, 2012).

3 The Four Kingdom Schema in the Early Mediaeval Apocalyptic Tradition

The common mediaeval apocalyptic tradition may be imagined as a broadly homogeneous environment in which distinctive regional ecologies existed in dynamic flux. Each of these ecologies had its set of idiosyncratic characteristics and was influenced by, and often in competition with, its neighbors.

The primary mechanism of change within this pattern was the need to re-interpret the schema of the four kingdoms in light of present-day events. A major resistance to such change was Rome's status as the fourth kingdom. Insofar as "Rome" existed, in whatever form or fantasy, the end would not come, or at least not in a historiographic schema that had pegged it as the final world empire. A key exegetical anchor here was the belief that the end would be delayed until "the one who now holds it back ... is taken out of the way" (2 Thess 2:7 NRSV), where the restraining power was taken to refer to Rome.³²

The conviction that Rome was the fourth and final world-kingdom was reinforced by several factors, including the inertial weight of tradition. Imperial Rome remained fresh in the memory of later generations in part because of its sheer size and longevity. Augustine of Hippo (354–430) favored Jerome's identification of the fourth kingdom with Rome,³³ and where Augustine went, many followed.³⁴ In the mediaeval memory, Rome was the paradigmatic Empire,

32 Haimo of Auxerre (d. ca. 865), *Expositio in Epistolam II ad Thessalonicenses*, re 2:7, *Id est hoc solummodo restat, ut Nero, qui nunc tenet imperium totus orbis, tandiu teneat illud donec de medio mundi tollatur potestas romanorum* = PL 117 col. 781. "That is, this alone remains, that Nero, who now holds all authority in the world, will hold it long enough until the power of the Romans is taken from the center of the world." Steven R. Cartwright and Kevin L. Hughes, *Second Thessalonians: Two Early Medieval Apocalyptic Commentaries*, TEAMS Commentary Series (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 2001), 28–29 (translation theirs). "Nero" is the Emperor reborn as the Antichrist. This "restraining power" was eschatologically relevant when read with 2 Thess 2:3, which forecasted a period of "falling away" before the Antichrist would reveal himself; cf. Haimo, op. cit., re 7:7: *BESTIA QVARTA TERRIBILIS. Romanorum est imperium omnibus terrenis regnis dissimile. Nomen uero istius bestie idcirco reticetur, ut quidquid terribilius cogitari potest intellegatur; [...]* ET HABEBAT CORNVA DECEM. *Dicunt in aduentu Antichristi reges DECEM orbem diuisuros romanum* = Sumi Shimohara, "Peut-on parler de millénarisme à l'époque carolingienne? L'apport de quelques sources exégétiques," *TM* 14 (2006): 99–138, citing manuscripts Albi, Médiathèque d'Albi [olim BM] 31, fols. 61r–72v, Barcelona, Catedral 64, fols. 117rb–124rb, and Torino, Biblioteca Nazionale Universitaria D.V.17, fols. 241v–252v.

33 Augustine, *Civ.*, 20.23: *Quattuor illa regna exposuerunt quidam Assyriorum, Persarum, Macedonum et Romanorum. Quam uero conuenienter id fecerint, qui nosse desiderant, legant presbyteri Hieronymi librum in Daniele m satis erudite diligenterque conscriptum.*

34 Shimohara, "Peut-on parler de millénarisme," with reference to the Latin writers of the eighth and ninth centuries.

whose imperial majesty dwarfed the “barbarian” states that had sprouted up in the former Imperial provinces like weeds in a palace garden that had been abandoned and gone to seed.

There was the sense, too, that Imperial Rome had absorbed Greece and Greek culture within its vast compass. The Graeco-Roman ideal animated a shared “western” sensibility that did not (and could never) extend farther eastward to include the empires of Egypt or the Ancient Near East. This cultural *translatio* also went the other way round, in that Greek civilization was broadcast by virtue of Rome and its Empire. (The same was later said for the Empire’s role in the spread of Christianity.) As Horace famously wrote, “Captive Greece took captive her fierce conqueror Rome.”³⁵ This concept, later formalized as *translatio studii*, would prove important to identity-construction in the High Middle Ages.

The post-classical memory of the majesty of Imperial Rome was regularly refreshed by the centripetal desire to “renovate” the Empire (*renovatio imperii*) via attempts to reconstitute some of its former parts.³⁶ That enterprise began with the Emperor Justinian’s re-conquest of the Italian peninsula in the middle of the sixth century.³⁷ Justinian, of course, *was* a “Roman,” since, unlike the western Empire, the eastern Empire had not collapsed. Its inhabitants continued to refer to themselves as Romans, their Empire as *Basileia tōn rhōmaiōn*, and Constantinople as the “seven-hilled city.”³⁸ From the Byzantine standpoint, Constantinople was Rome.³⁹ It was as if the Empire had simply picked

35 *Graecia capta ferum victorem cepit et artes intulit agresti Latio*. Horace, *Carm.*, 2.2.1, lines 156–57 (free translation mine).

36 See, most recently, the essays in Maria Pia Guermandi and Silvia Urbini, eds., *Imperiūto: Renovatio imperii: Ravenna nell’Europa ottoniana* (Bologna: 1BC, 2014); and in Wouter Bracke, Jan de Maeyer, and Jan Nelis, eds. *Renovatio, inventio, absentia imperii: From the Roman Empire to Contemporary Imperialism*, EBHE 6 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2018).

37 It arguably lasted until Benito Mussolini’s Italian Empire in Africa of late 1930s. Rome (or Rome/Babylon) would become identified with the United States or the European (Economic) Community in modern and contemporary eschatological speculation.

38 Ioannis Stouraitis, “Byzantine Romanness: From Geopolitical to Ethnic Conceptions,” in *Transformations of Romanness: Early Medieval Regions and Identities*, ed. Walter Pohl et al., Millennium Studies 77 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2018), 123–40. Centuries later, the religious and political heirs of Byzantium would call their capital, Moscow, the “third Rome,” the assumption being that a fourth Rome shall never be.

39 Gerhard Podskalsky, *Byzantinische Reicheschatologie: Die Periodisierung der Weltgeschichte in den 4. Grossreichen (Daniel 2 und 7) und dem tausendjährigen Friedensreiche (Apok. 20): Eine motivgeschichtliche Untersuchung*, Münchener Universitäts-Schriften, Reihe der philosophischen Fakultät 9 (Munich: W. Fink, 1972) is still the starting-point for research on the four kingdom schema in Byzantine political theory. But Paul J. Alexander’s criticisms in his review of the volume (*Speculum* 50 [1975]: 144–45) remain relevant.

up and moved its headquarters east, to a better and more secure location. Constantinople had inherited Rome's past, and thus also its place in the eschatological future.⁴⁰

The conviction that Constantinople was Rome and that the Eastern Roman Empire was the fourth and final world-kingdom remained at the core of Byzantine political identity throughout the mediaeval millennium. It was articulated in a wide range of apocalyptic writings, both stand-alone and embedded. But the seismic events of the seventh century caused this identification to be questioned, especially in regional contexts. Numerous texts bear witness to this process, including the apocryphal Daniel apocalypica and the Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius. The former are solely a product of the East, while the Apocalypse spanned the common mediaeval apocalyptic tradition in its full geographic scope, East and West.

3.1 *The Apocryphal Daniel Apocalypica and the Syriac Apocalyptic Tradition*

The corpus of the apocryphal Daniel apocalypica currently consists of twenty-seven writings that are represented in over 100 manuscript copies.⁴¹ All are pseudonymously attributed to Daniel but were composed during the mediaeval millennium, long after the biblical era. Here "writings" is a more appropriate description than "texts" *sensu stricto*, since many of these apocalypica are amalgamations of older oracles and do not always exhibit textual coherence over time as demonstrated in the manuscript evidence. About a third of these writings are formal apocalypses according to the best definition of the literary genre.⁴² The rest are apocalyptic oracles.

The majority of the Daniel apocalypica are Christian compositions. One Islamic specimen survives, as well as several mediaeval Jewish ones. The primary language of composition was Greek, although examples were also written in or translated into Arabic, Armenian, Coptic, Hebrew, Judaeo-Persian, Latin, Russian, Slavonic, and Syriac.

40 Albrecht Berger, "Das apokalyptische Konstantinopel: Topographisches in apokalyptischen Schriften der mittelbyzantinischen Zeit," in *Endzeiten: Eschatologie in den monotheistischen Weltreligionen*, ed. F. Schmieder and W. Brandes, Millennium Studies 16 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 135–55.

41 Lorenzo DiTommaso, *The Book of Daniel and the Apocryphal Daniel Literature*, SVTP 25 (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 89–230, listing twenty-four works, and, more recently, DiTommaso, "Apocryphal Daniel Apocalypses," listing twenty-seven works, with a revised and updated conspectus of the manuscript evidence.

42 John J. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, 5.

The Daniel apocalypica are a phenomenon of the Eastern Mediterranean world and Persia.⁴³ This is in contrast to other Byzantine Christian apocalyptic works, such as Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius, the Sibilla Tiburtina, and the Oracles of Leo the Wise, which later traveled westward and shaped the Latin apocalyptic tradition.

The relationship among the Daniel apocalypica is complicated. Each is a discrete work, but circles may be drawn around various groups within the corpus, whose constituents were composed over a span of a thousand years. The earliest extant exemplar, the Seventh Vision of Daniel, dates from the fifth century and the dawn of the mediaeval millennium. Byzantium was the major center of production, especially in the period from the seventh to the ninth centuries, and again after the Crusader sack of Constantinople in 1204. Several Daniel works within the Byzantine circle (which extended to other apocalyptic traditions, especially Slavonic and Armenian)⁴⁴ exhibit one or more shared oracles, the result of their re-combinatory compositional process.

Common elements among the Daniel apocalypica include their ascription to the biblical prophet⁴⁵ and their overtly historical-eschatological tenor. These two data are related. The figure of Daniel and the revelatory content of the dreams and visions in the biblical book provided the conceptual base for the creation of post-biblical writings under his name. These are Daniel apocalypica by virtue of their revelatory content as well as in their attribution, and are distinguished in both respects from other “clusters” of writings attributed to the Sibyls, Leo the Wise, Merlin, or Joachim of Fiore. Despite these distinctions, though, all these writings are strongly historical-eschatological in focus, in step with the overall mediaeval apocalyptic tradition.

Another commonality among the Daniel apocalypica is the fact that they are new predictions, not commentaries on, or interpretations of, the biblical book. What is more, their themes and imagery are more representative of the common mediaeval apocalyptic tradition than their biblical antecedent. The apocryphal Daniel writings are sung in the same key as the biblical book of Daniel, but their melodies are different.

43 Two Latin translations of Greek Daniel oracles are known; both are very late. See DiTommaso, “Apocryphal Daniel Apocalypses,” 295 and 297–98.

44 Paul J. Alexander, *The Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), and Augustino Pertusi, *Fine di Bisanzio e fine del mondo: Significato e ruolo storico delle profezie sulla caduta di Costantinopoli in oriente e in occidente*, nss 3 (Rome: Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medioevo, 1988).

45 A few works are preserved in manuscript copies that are attributed to other figures, such as John Chrysostom.

One difference is a lack of interest in the four kingdom schemata, which for the most part is not redeployed in the apocryphal works.⁴⁶ As a result, and despite the fact that these Daniel writings are among the core writings of the early mediaeval apocalyptic tradition, they do not reveal much about the use of the four kingdom schema in these centuries.

The outstanding exceptions to the rule are the two Syriac Daniel apocalypses: (i) the Apocalypse of Daniel/Revelation of Daniel the Prophet, which is preserved in two manuscripts; and (ii) the Vision of the Young/Small Daniel, which survives in a single copy.⁴⁷ Each apocalypse recycles imagery from the biblical book to a far greater extent than the other writings in the corpus, and both deploy the four kingdom schema in their reviews of history.

The date of each apocalypse and nature of their textual affiliation are controversial. Sebastian P. Brock's thesis is the most convincing. In his estimation, extensive passages from the Young Daniel also appear in the Syriac Apocalypse of Daniel, and both apocalypses are based on a common source that does not antedate the early seventh century CE.⁴⁸

The seventh century was a volatile and perilous time for Syriac Christians, who were faced first with the successes of Persian Sassanid campaigns against the Byzantine Empire (602–622),⁴⁹ and then, more catastrophically, the quicksilver conquest of the Levant by the Arab Muslims (633–651).⁵⁰ The result was

46 The Vision of the Prophet Daniel on the Emperors was composed in Greek but survives only in Slavonic. It correlates the four kingdoms with eighth-century Byzantine Emperors, though Rome/Byzantium remains the fourth and final kingdom. DiTommaso, "Apocryphal Daniel Apocalypses," 285–86.

47 See DiTommaso, "Apocryphal Daniel Apocalypses," 279–81, for descriptions, manuscripts, and bibliography.

48 Sebastian P. Brock, "The *Young Daniel*: A Syriac Apocalyptic Text on the End, and the Problem of Its Dating," in *Apocalypticism and Eschatology in Late Antiquity: Encounters in the Abrahamic Religions, 6th–8th Centuries*, ed. Hagit Amirav, Emmanouela Grypeou, and Guy G. Strousma, LAHR 17 (Leuven: Peeters, 2017), 75–86; and Sebastian P. Brock, "The *Small/Young Daniel* Re-Edited," in *The Embroidered Bible: Studies in Biblical Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha in Honour of Michael E. Stone*, ed. Lorenzo DiTommaso, Matthias Henze, and William Adler, SVTP 26 (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 250–84.

49 Lutz Greisiger, "Opening the Gates of the North in 627: War, Anti-Byzantine Sentiment and Apocalyptic Expectancy in the Near East prior to the Arab Invasion," in *Peoples of the Apocalypse: Eschatological Beliefs and Political Scenarios*, ed. Wolfram Brandes, Felicitas Schmieder, and Rebekka Voß, Millennium Studies 63 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2016), 63–79.

50 On the historical contexts and their relationship to apocalyptic speculation in these centuries, see Stephen J. Shoemaker, *The Apocalypse of Empire: Imperial Eschatology in Late Antique and Early Islam* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018). On the eschatological valence of Rome in the sources of this period, see Pablo Ubierna,

an explosion of Syriac apocalyptic writings.⁵¹ All are historical-eschatological in orientation, including the two Daniel apocalypses⁵² and the Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius.⁵³ Many employ the four kingdom schema in order to make sense of the seismic shifts of power, now that Rome/Byzantium was no longer the final world-empire.

The political instability of the era is reflected in the identification of the fourth and final world-kingdom.⁵⁴ Writing near the close of the seventh century, the Syriac author of the Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius could still imagine the resurgence of Roman (Byzantine) power to overthrow the Sons of Ishmael, or Muslim invaders. For him, Rome remained the fourth world-kingdom.⁵⁵ Over time, though, the possibility of a Byzantine re-conquest diminished as the Umayyid caliphate solidified its control and settled down to the business of

“Recherches sur l’apocalyptique syriaque et byzantine au VII^e siècle: la place de l’Empire romain dans une histoire du salut,” *BCEMA* 2 (2008): 1–28.

- 51 Cynthia Villagomez, “Christian Salvation through Muslim Domination: Divine Punishment and Syriac Apocalyptic Expectation in the Seventh and Eighth Centuries,” *ME* 4 (1998): 204–18.
- 52 The special path taken by Syriac Christianity is exhibited in (among other things) a set of distinctive exegetical traditions and a large corpus of apocryphal and apocalyptic writings that included both ancient sources preserved in that language and new ones composed in it.
- 53 The corpus of stand-alone Syriac apocalyptic works of the seventh and early eighth centuries also includes the Apocalypse of Pseudo-Ephrem, the Edessene Apocalypse, the Apocalypse of Pseudo-Ezra, and the Revelations and Testimonies about the Dispensation of Christ. For summaries, manuscripts, and bibliographic data, see the relevant entries in David Thomas et al., eds., *Christian-Muslim Relations: A Bibliographical History: Volume 1 (600–900)* (Leiden: Brill, 2009). This roster does not include Syriac apocalyptic writings in other genres. Both categories—stand-alone prophecies and apocalyptic works in other genres—are discussed in Witold Witakowski, “Syriac Apocalyptic Literature,” in *The Armenian Apocalyptic Tradition: A Comparative Perspective: Essays Presented in Honor of Professor Robert W. Thompson on His Eightieth Birthday*, ed. Kevork B. Bardakjian and Sergio La Porta, SVTP 25 (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 667–87; and, more panoramically, in Muriel Debié, “Les apocalypses apocryphes syriaques: des textes pseudépigraphiques de l’Ancien et du Nouveau Testament,” in *Les apocryphes syriaques*, ed. Muriel Debié et al., ES 2 (Paris: Geuthner, 2005), 111–46.
- 54 The Syriac Apocalypse of Ezra repurposes elements of the “Eagle Vision” of 4 Ezra; see Jean-Baptiste Chabot, “L’Apocalypse d’Esdras touchant le royaume des Arabes,” *RSém* 2 (1894): 242–50 and 333–46.
- 55 See the next section, on “The Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius and the 7,000-Year Schema” below. The interpretative tradition that God had tasked the Roman Empire to rule the world as the fourth kingdom until the Second Coming is first found in Syriac Christianity in the *Demonstrations* of Aphrahat (ca. 280–345 CE); see Christopher J. Bonura, “The Roman Empire of the Apocalypse: History, Eschatology, and the Four Kingdoms of Daniel in Late Antiquity, the Early Medieval Middle East, and Byzantium” (PhD diss., University of California, Berkeley, 2019). I am grateful to its author for sending me a copy.

ruling its subjects. The Revelations and Testimonies about the Dispensation of Christ, which were written a generation after Pseudo-Methodius, still forecasts that the Romans will hand over the Kingdom to God at the end of time. But it de-historicizes the eschaton by unmooring it from human figures and earthly events, making it something more spiritual.⁵⁶ More politically sober is the Gospel of the Twelve Apostles, a work of approximately the same vintage.⁵⁷ Its author could no longer envision an historical end to Islamic rule,⁵⁸ and so added the Sons of Ishmael to the schema.⁵⁹ By the early eighth century, it must have seemed to Syriac Christians that Islam was there to stay, in both its historical and historiographic senses.⁶⁰

3.2 *The Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius and the 7,000-Year Schema*

Traditional biblical schemata retained a certain degree of traction during the early mediaeval period. The “seventy weeks” of Daniel 9 and the “millennium” of the Revelation of John remained relevant, either in themselves or harmonized with the four kingdom schema, and sometimes in dialogue with other chronological “truffles” that a close reading of Scripture will unearth. The high degree of attention to detail that is associated with this kind of eschatological exegesis is characteristic more of the apocalyptic commentaries, homilies, and similar writings than the stand-alone apocalypica, which tend to focus on end-time expectations, although there are exceptions.

56 M. Débie, “Muslim-Christian Controversy in an Unedited Syriac Text: Revelations and Testimonies about Our Lord’s Dispensation,” in *The Encounter of Eastern Christianity with Early Islam*, ed. Emmanouela Grypeou, Mark N. Swanson, and David R. Thomas (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 225–35.

57 Hans J. W. Drijvers, “The Gospel of the Twelve Apostles: A Syriac Apocalypse from the Early Islamic Period,” in *The Byzantine and Early Islamic Near East: I. Problems in the Literary Source Material*, ed. Averil Cameron and Lawrence I. Conrad, SLAEI 1 (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1992), 189–213.

58 So Drijvers, “The Gospel of the Twelve Apostles,” 210–11, contra Gerrit J. Reinink, “A Concept of History,” in *The Byzantine and Early Islamic Near East: I. Problems in the Literary Source Material*, ed. Averil Cameron and Lawrence I. Conrad, SLAEI 1 (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1992), 149–88 at 179–81.

59 Other Syriac authors of the era were equally sanguine in their responses to the winds of political change. Pseudo-Ephrem and John of Phenek reworked the schema to accommodate the shifts in power, Persian Sassanid or Arab Muslim. See Wido Th. van Peursen, “Daniel’s Four Kingdoms in the Syriac Tradition,” in *Tradition and Innovation in Biblical Interpretation: Studies Presented to Professor Eep Talstra on the Occasion of His Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, ed. Wido Th. van Peursen and Janet W. Dyk, SSN 57 (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 189–207, at 190–91.

60 Villagomez, “Christian Salvation,” 218; and Peursen, “Daniel’s Four Kingdoms,” 193–94.

Alongside such traditional schemata appeared a slew of new mediaeval patterns. One early example is the schema of the ten suns of the Sibilla Tiburtina. The lost Greek original of this work dates to the end of the fourth century or fifth century CE, and is among the first mediaeval apocalyptic writings.⁶¹ Anke Holdenried's study of the Latin versions of this work demonstrates its centrality in Western Europe from the twelfth century onward.⁶²

Another historiographic framework that would later enjoy immense popularity in the West was the three "states" of the Calabrian abbot Joachim of Fiore (1135–1202).⁶³ More to the East, the schema of the nineteen kings or kingdoms structured several works within the Coptic apocalyptic milieu, including the Fourteenth Vision of Daniel.⁶⁴

The most important new historiographic pattern to emerge in the early mediaeval period, however, was the seven-millennia schema of the Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius. This work was composed by an anonymous Syriac monk near the end of the seventh century, in the wake of the Muslim onslaught.⁶⁵ It was swiftly translated from Syriac into Greek,⁶⁶ and then again from Greek

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- 61 Paul J. Alexander, *The Oracle of Baalbek: The Tiburtine Sibyl in Greek Dress*, DOS 10 (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Center for Byzantine Studies, 1967). Recent English translations of the Greek and Latin texts: Rieuwerd Buitenwerf, "The Tiburtine Sibyl (Greek)," in *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: More Noncanonical Scriptures: Volume 1*, ed. Richard Bauckham, James R. Davila, and Alexander Panayotov (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013), 176–88; and Stephen J. Shoemaker, "The Tiburtine Sibyl: A New Translation and Introduction," in *New Testament Apocrypha: More Noncanonical Scriptures: Volume 1*, ed. Tony Burke and Brent Landau (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016), 510–25.
- 62 Anke Holdenried, *The Sibyl and Her Scribes: Manuscripts and Interpretation of the Latin Sibylla Tiburtina c. 1050–1500* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006).
- 63 The contributions in Matthias Riedl, ed., *A Companion to Joachim of Fiore*, BCCT 75 (Leiden: Brill, 2018), are a fine port of entry into the topic. See also the "Conclusions" below.
- 64 Jos van Lent, "The Proto-Fourteenth Vision of Daniel," in *Christian-Muslim Relations: A Bibliographical History: Volume 1 (600–900)*, ed. David Thomas et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 309–13; and Jos van Lent, "The Fourteenth Vision of Daniel," in *Christian-Muslim Relations. A Bibliographical History: Volume 3 (1050–1200)*, ed. David Thomas et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 697–703.
- 65 The Syriac text survives in one complete manuscript and several partial copies. The standard edition is Gerrit J. Reinink, *Die syrische Apokalypse des Pseudo-Methodius*, CSCO 540–41, SS 220–21 (Leuven: Peeters, 1993).
- 66 Anastasios Lolos, *Die Apokalypse des Ps.-Methodios*, BZKP 83 (Meisenheim: Hain, 1976); and Anastasios Lolos, *Die dritte und vierte redaktion des Ps.-Methodios*, BZKP 94 (Meisenheim: Hain, 1978). Four recensions of the Greek text are known. The extant manuscripts are all relatively late. A new edition of the Greek manuscript copies of the Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius is a desideratum. Approximately 75 manuscripts beyond those that Lolos lists in his volumes contain all or part of the text. I have seen about

into Latin. Thus, by the first half of the eighth century, the Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius was circulating widely in both the East and the West.

The Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius encapsulates the common mediaeval apocalyptic tradition in all respects, including its historical-eschatological focus and its distinctive eschatological narrative, which it did much to fashion. The text describes the history of the world, beginning with the expulsion of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden and culminating in the second coming of Christ. This retelling is unremarkable: revisions of all or parts of the biblical record are as old as the Bible itself (cf. 1–2 Chronicles).

What is extraordinary is the way that its author structured the history of the world into seven millennia, each millennium corresponding to one day of creation. The underlying presumption, based on Scripture, is that one day for God is like a thousand years for humanity.⁶⁷ The 7,000-year schema did not originate with the Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius.⁶⁸ But the influence of the work, by virtue of its many translations and versions, made it the principal vehicle for the schema's transmission.⁶⁹

The Apocalypse's description of the first six millennia of the world (chapters 1–10) consists of an idiosyncratic and highly abbreviated retelling of Old Testament history, followed by an account of the Macedonian king, Alexander the Great, and his successors. Although its author focuses on chronology and genealogy, he never lets the eschatological horizon get too far out of sight.

The dawn of the seventh millennium heralds the beginning of the end-time (chapters 11–14), which is structured in part by the seventy-week schema of Daniel 9. As with all apocalyptic writings, the events of last days are considered to be foreordained and part of the divine plan. The eschatological curtain rises when "Persians" (the Sassanid Empire) are uprooted by the "seed of Ishmael" (the Arab Muslims). After causing great devastation and much tribulation, the Ishmaelites are conquered by the Last Roman Emperor, who pacifies the world. This golden time is shattered when the Gates of the North open and

a quarter of this number; the rest remain subject to verification by autopsy. The texts of some of these manuscripts have already been published.

67 Cf. Ps 90:4, which is accorded an apocalyptic valence in 2 Pet 3:8.

68 Richard Landes, "Lest the Millennium Be Fulfilled: Apocalyptic Expectations and the Pattern of Western Chronography 100–800 CE," in *The Use and Abuse of Eschatology in the Middle Ages*, ed. Werner Verbeke, Daniel Verhelst, and Andries Welkenhuysen, ML 15 (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1988), 137–211, esp. 161–65.

69 Compare Beatus of Liebana (ca. 730–ca. 800), *Commentaria in Apocalypsin* (ca. 776?), book IV, which also segments the biblical record into seven ages. Their start- and end-dates, however, are not the same as those of Pseudo-Methodius. Critical edition: E. Romero-Pose, ed., *Sancti Beati a Liebana Commentarius in Apocalypsin*, 2 vols. (Rome: Typis Officinae Polygraphicae, 1985).

the hordes of Gog and Magog are released. After their defeat, the Antichrist, Son of Perdition appears. The Roman Emperor travels to Golgotha and places his crown on the Holy Cross, which ascends to heaven. The Son of Perdition enters Jerusalem and performs miracles, deceiving all. He sits in the Temple as a god, but is shamed and denounced by Enoch and Elijah. The Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius closes with the return of Christ, the destruction of the Antichrist, and the Final Judgment.

The era of Alexander the Great in chapter 8 is introduced with an account of the four world-kings:⁷⁰

8.1. Ἄκουε τοίνυν αὐθις σὺν ἀκριβείᾳ, πῶς αἱ τέσσαρες βασιλεῖαι ἀλλήλαις συνήφθησαν, οἱ Αἰθίοπες Μακεδόσι, Ῥωμαίοις καὶ Ἕλληνας. αὐταὶ εἰσιν οἱ τέσσαρες ἄνεμοι τῆς ὑπὲρ οὐρανόν, οὓς ἐθεάσατο ὁ Δαυιδ εὐσεβήσας τὴν μεγάλην θάλασσαν.⁷¹

8.1. *Audi igitur nunc certissime, quomodo quatuor haec regna convenierunt sibi: aethiopes enim macedonis et romanis greci. Haec sunt quattuor uenti < ... > cummouentes mare magnum.*⁷²

The sequence is remarkable in several respects. Ethiopia, rather than the traditional Babylon, is presented as the first kingdom, while Macedon is the second kingdom, rather than Media-Persia. Also, Ethiopia and Macedon are “united” with each other, as are the third and fourth kingdoms, Greece and Rome.

The alterations to the schema are the key to its function in the late-seventh-century Syrian context of the Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius. At issue was whether Jesus had a single divine or human/divine “nature” (a theological stance called miaphysitism) or if he manifested his divine and human natures separately (dyaphysitism).

70 There are slight differences and mistranslations, but the Greek Recension I is a close rendering of the Syriac text, with a notable interpolation at 13.7–10. Similarly, the Latin Recension I is a close translation of the Greek Recension I.

71 “So hear again precisely how the four kingdoms were united with each other, the Ethiopians with the Macedonians, and the Greeks with the Romans. These are the four winds under heaven, which Daniel saw disturbing the great sea” (text and translation: Benjamin Garstad, *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius: An Alexandrian World Chronicle*, DOML 14 [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012], 22–23). The biblical reference is to Dan 7:2.

72 “So hear now most certainly how these four kingdoms came together among themselves, the Ethiopians with the Macedonians and the Greeks with the Romans. These are the four winds < ... > disturbing the great sea” (text and translation: Garstad, *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius*, 96–97). This portion of the text is reproduced in the two main Latin Recensions, I and II.

Syriac Christianity is miaphysite, but the Byzantine Greeks were dyaphysites. It was imperative, therefore, for the miaphysite Syriac author⁷³ of the Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius to demonstrate that recent events were in step with the divine plan for history and in line with the theological stance of his community.

He did this in extraordinary fashion. First, he grafted the four kingdom schema onto the root of the miaphysite kingdom of Ethiopia⁷⁴ by identifying Alexander's mother as an Ethiopian princess named Chuseth (8.2).⁷⁵ Her union with Alexander's father, Philip of Macedon, explains how the kingdoms of Ethiopia and Macedon became "united." Second, he forecast that the eschatological figure of the Last Roman Emperor would march forth "from the sea of Ethiopia" (13.11). This shifted the nexus of salvation history to the kingdom of Ethiopia and closed the historical loop that began with the mixing of the kingdoms of Ethiopia and Greece in the person of Alexander.

The insertion of monophysite Ethiopia as the first kingdom of the schema anchored the author's Christological position *vis-à-vis* his Syriac co-religionists who favored the diaphysite (Chalcedonian) view. At the same time, the Muslim triumph served notice of divine punishment wrought on the immoral—and diaphysite—Byzantine emperors:

11.5. Οὕτω καὶ τοὺς υἱοὺς Ἰσμαήλ. οὐχ ὅτι ἀγαπᾷ αὐτοὺς Κύριος ὁ θεὸς δίδωσιν αὐτοῖς δυναστείαν κρατῆσαι τῆς γῆς τῶν χριστιανῶν, ἀλλὰ διὰ τὴν ἁμαρτίαν καὶ τὴν ἀνομίαν τὴν ὑπ' αὐτῶν γινομένην.⁷⁶

11.5. *Sic etenim filios Ismael, non quod eos diligit dominus Deus, dabit eis potentiam hanc, ut obteneant terram christianorum, sed propter peccatum et iniquitatem, quae ab eis committitur.*⁷⁷

73 The monophysite identity of the author is supported by other evidence, such as the attestation that "Methodius" received his revelation on Mount Senegar (Jebel Singar), a monophysite stronghold.

74 His interpretative key was probably Ps 68:31b: "Let Ethiopia hasten to stretch out its hands to God" (NRSV) or, in the Syriac Peshitta, "Kush will surrender to God." "Kush" appears in the Hebrew (MT) version, "Ethiopia" in the Greek (LXX 67:32b).

75 Christine Stöllinger-Löser, "Chuseth, Pseudo-Methodius und Rudolf von Ems: Wer war die Mutter Alexanders des Großen," *ASSL* 155 (2003): 347–54.

76 "Just so with the Sons of Ishmael. Not because the Lord God loves them does he give them power to conquer the land of the Christians, but because of the sin and the lawlessness which have been brought into being by them" (text and translation: Garstad, *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius*, 38–39).

77 "Just so with the Sons of Ishmael, it is not because the Lord God loves them will he give them this power that they should conquer the land of the Christians, but because

This is not to say that the author of the Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius either desired or expected the Muslims to remain in power. As the quotation asserts, God does not love the Sons of Ishmael. Their imminent captivity, death, and ruin are foreordained at the hands of the Last Roman Emperor. Gerrit Reinink understands this anti-Muslim stance as a reply to the seventh-century Armenian archbishop (Pseudo-) Sebeos, who regarded the Arab Muslims as the new fourth and final kingdom.⁷⁸ This is possible, but the rationale for the expectation need not be sought beyond the general hope for a Christian triumph at the end of time. Reinink is correct, though, in that an overarching purpose of Apocalypse was to forestall the conversion of Syriac Christians to the religion of their new Muslim overlords.⁷⁹

The Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius traveled westward in the early eighth century. There, in Latin Christendom, it became part of another apocalyptic tradition, one in which the four kingdom schema of Daniel was used to reinforce the present order rather than to forecast radical eschatological upheaval.

3.3 *Translatio imperii and the West in the Early Mediaeval Centuries*

As mentioned, the Byzantines considered themselves to be Romans in every respect. From their point of view, the Empire had not fallen. It had merely relocated its base of operations from Rome to Constantinople, on the eastern side of the Mediterranean basin. Accompanying it were notions of the *translatio imperii*, Rome as the fourth empire,⁸⁰ and Constantinople's place in the eschatological drama that was expected to play out.

This was not the perspective of the Latin Christians in the aftermath of the collapse of the Western Empire.⁸¹ They were, of course, too busy dealing with

of the sin and lawlessness that are committed by them" (text and translation: Garstad, *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius*, 110–13). This portion of the text is not reproduced in Latin Recension II.

78 Reinink, "Pseudo-Methodius," 157–58.

79 Reinink, "Pseudo-Methodius." See also the "Conclusions" below.

80 Paul Magdalino demonstrates that the imperial assimilation of Christian eschatology began with Constantine in the early fourth century; see "The History of the Future and its Uses: Prophecy, Policy and Propaganda," in *The Making of Byzantine History: Studies Dedicated to Donald M. Nicol on his Seventieth Birthday*, ed. Roderick Beaton and Charlotte Roueché (Aldershot: Variorum, 1993), 3–34.

81 Nor, it should be said, was it that of Jews of the same era. On the four kingdom schema in Jewish apocalyptic works of mediaeval period, see Norman Roth, *Jews, Visigoths and Muslims in Medieval Spain: Cooperation and Conflict*, *MIPTS 10* (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 205–14; and W. J. van Bekkum, "Four Kingdoms Will Rule: Echoes of Apocalypticism and Political Reality in Late Antiquity and Medieval Judaism," in *Endzeiten: Eschatologie in den monotheistischen Weltreligionen*, ed. Wolfram Brandes and Felicitas Schmieder, *Millennium Studies 16* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 101–18.

the aftermath of the apocalypse that had already occurred to worry about the nuances of the one that was to come.

Gradually, as society began to reconstitute itself, the new states in Western Europe began to think of themselves as heirs to Imperial Rome. These states were runty by ancient standards, yet still “kingdoms” by the measure of their own time. But it was only when Pope Leo III crowned Charlemagne *imperator romanorum* (“Emperor of the Romans”) on Christmas Day in the year 800 that the claim to imperial inheritance could be fairly made.⁸² Charlemagne’s coronation revived the fourth kingdom, retarded the appearance of the Antichrist, and reasserted the western claim to the imperial mantle, a claim that the Byzantine Emperor Michael I recognized twelve years later. The coronation also initiated an imperial competition with Constantinople—das *Zweikaiserproblem*—that culminated with the sack of that city during the Fourth Crusade in 1204 and terminated with the final Ottoman conquest of the Eastern Empire in 1453.⁸³

Underpinning Charlemagne’s imperial claim was the mediaeval political concept of *translatio imperii*, or the serial transfer of *imperium* from kingdom to kingdom until the time of the end.⁸⁴ The classical Roman use of *imperium* as an

82 For the context, see Owen Phelan, *The Formation of Christian Europe: The Carolingians, Baptism and the Imperium Christianum* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014). Carolingian iconography made frequent use of Roman imperial models; see Karl F. Morrison, with Henry Grunthal, *Carolingian Coinage*, Numismatic Notes and Monographs 158 (New York: American Numismatic Society, 1967).

83 See A. Lamma, “Il problema dei due imperi e dell’Italia meridionale nel giudizio delle fonti letterarie dei secoli IX e X,” in *Atti del 3° Congresso internazionale di studi sull’alto Medioevo (Benevento—Montevergine—Salerno—Amalfi, 14–18 ottobre 1956)* (Spoleto: Presso la sede del Centro di studi, 1959), 154–253; and Constantine N. Tsirpanlis, “Byzantine Reactions to the Coronation of Charlemagne (780–813),” *Byzantina* 6 (1974): 345–60, for the “two-emperor” competition during its early phase.

84 Giuseppe Martini, “Traslazione dell’Impero e donazione di Costantino nel pensiero e nella politica d’Innocenzo III,” *Archivio della Società romana di storia patria* 56/57 (1933/34): 219–362; Werner Goetz, *Translatio imperii: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Geschichtsdenkens und der politischen Theorien im Mittelalter und in der frühen Neuzeit* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1958); Josef Fleckenstein, “Zum mittelalterlichen Geschichtsbewußtsein,” in *Archäologie und Geschichtsbewußtsein*, ed. Hermann Müller-Karpe (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1982), 53–67; Franz-Josef Schmale, *Funktion und Formen mittelalterlicher Geschichtsschreibung: Eine Einführung* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1985); and, more generally, Werner Goetz, “Die Danielrezeption in Abendland: Spätantike und Mittelalter,” in *Europa, Tausendjähriges Reich und Neue Welt: Zwei Jahrtausende Geschichte und Utopie in der Rezeption des Danielbuches*, ed. Mariano Delgado, Klaus Koch, and Edgar Marsch (Freiburg: Universitätsverlag; Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2003), 176–97; Tamás Nótári, “*Translatio imperii*—Thoughts on Continuity of Empires in European Political Traditions,” *AJH* 52 (2011): 146–56, is a useful overview.

invested power in a human figure is instructive in this regard.⁸⁵ But the specific application of the *translatio* in its formal historiographic sense is more directly informed by the four kingdom schema. The *locus classicus* here is Daniel 2, where the monarchs are correlated to their sovereign kingdoms or empires, represented by the sequence of metals of diminishing value. “You, O king ... you are the head of gold” (2:37–38, NRSV), so Daniel says to Nebuchadnezzar, interpreting the king’s dream. The theological threads stitching the classical and biblical traditions together were spun a few centuries later by patristic writers, where the idea of a king as the earthly *imitatio* of God was fused with the concept of an emperor who was divinely appointed and sovereign.⁸⁶

The utility of the *translatio imperii* in the early mediaeval West was not restricted to its Carolingian application.⁸⁷ The schema was repurposed in Iberia,⁸⁸ Wessex,⁸⁹ and Normandy.⁹⁰ The process in its totality may be understood as the attempt to re-channel the *translatio imperii* to regional dynasties.

85 The Romans also understood the shift of political power and military might on the corporate level, in this case from the Greek world to their own. See above, n. 12, regarding Polybius.

86 Gerbern S. Oegema, “Die Danielrezeption in der alten Kirche,” in *Europa, Tausendjähriges Reich und Neue Welt: Zwei Jahrtausende Geschichte und Utopie in der Rezeption des Danielbuches*, ed. Mariano Delgado, Klaus Koch, and Edgar Marsch (Freiburg: Universitätsverlag; Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2003), 84–104; and Giuseppe Zecchini, “Latin Historiography: Jerome, Orosius and the Western Chronicles,” in *Greek and Roman Historiography in Late Antiquity: Fourth to Sixth Century A.D.*, ed. Gabriele Marasco (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 317–45.

87 Goez, *Translatio imperii*; and Stelian Brezeanu, “‘Translatio imperii’ und das lateinische Kaiserreich von Konstantinopel,” *RevRo* 14 (1975): 607–17.

88 Rodrigo Furtado, “The Chronica Prophetica in MS. Madrid, RAH Aem. 78,” in *Forme di accesso al sapere in età tardoantica e altomedievale: raccolta delle relazioni discusse nell’incontro internazionale di Trieste, Biblioteca Statale, 24–25 settembre 2015*, ed. Lucio Cristante and Vanni Veronesi, Polymnia 19 (Trieste: Edizioni Università di Trieste, 2016), 75–100. According to Furtado, the addition of Orosius’s work to the version of the Chronica prophetica in the “Roda codex” (Madrid, Real academia de la Historia, 78) in the eleventh century signals the integration of *translatio imperii* of the *Prophetica* within the broader context of world history in its Iberian context. Pablo Ubierna’s examination of the abbreviated version of the Apocalypse in the same manuscript does not bear on our study, although he suggests that it was translated directly from the Syriac, without an intermediary Greek or Latin Recension I or II vector; see his article, “Byzantine Greek Apocalypses and the West: A Case Study,” in *Apocalypticism and Eschatology in Late Antiquity: Encounters in the Abrahamic Religions, 6th–8th Centuries*, ed. Hagit Amirav, Emmanouela Grypeou, and Guy G. Strousma, LAHR 17 (Leuven: Peeters, 2017), 205–18, at 214–15.

89 Francis Leneghan, “*Translatio Imperii*: The Old English Orosius and the Rise of Wessex,” *Anglia* 133 (2015): 656–705.

90 Benjamin Pohl, “*Translatio imperii Constantini ad Normannos*: Constantine the Great as a Possible Model for the Depiction of Rollo in Dudo of St. Quentin’s *Historia Normannorum*,” *Millennium: Yearbook on the Culture and History of the First Millennium* 9 (2012): 299–342.

Unfortunately the Latin Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius⁹¹ sheds only a little light on this process, despite the fact that over 200 manuscript copies of all or parts of the work are extant, including a few that date from the eighth century, i.e., only a few generations removed from the composition of the Syriac original.⁹² The manuscripts demonstrate several recensions of the Latin text, of which Recensions I and II are the most important, plus several abbreviated versions. The problem is that there is no satisfactory study of the Latin text in its entirety, and in particular of each manuscript in view of its recension, date, and place of production, which might in turn illuminate how its features (such as the four kingdom schema) were adapted to regional conditions.⁹³ In other words, we have an excellent snapshot of the broadcast transmission of the text in the West, but our picture lacks the fine resolution that is necessary to make out its details.

Despite this lack of clarity, a few points stand out. Willem J. Aerts and George A. A. Kortekaas have observed that the Latin Recension II de-emphasizes the four kingdoms.⁹⁴ Recension II also substitutes the title “King of the Christians and the Romans” (*rex christianorum et romanorum*) for the

91 Ernst Sackur, *Sibyllinische Texte und Forschungen: Pseudomethodius, Adso und die Tiburtinische Sibylle* (Halle a.d. Saale: M. Niemeyer, 1898); and W. J. Aerts and G. A. A. Kortekaas, *Die Apokalypse des Pseudo-Methodius: Die ältesten griechischen und lateinischen Übersetzungen*, CSCO 569–70, ss 97–98 (Louvain: Peeters, 1998). See also the manuscript conspectus of Marc Laureys and Daniel Verhelst, “Pseudo-Methodius, *Revelationes*: Textgeschichte und kritische Edition: Ein Leuven-Groninger Forschungsprojekt,” in *The Use and Abuse of Eschatology in the Middle Ages*, ed. Werner Verbeke, Daniel Verhelst, and Andries Welkenhuysen, ML 15 (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1988), 112–36. The Greek and Latin texts in Aerts and Kortekaas’s edition are reproduced, with English translations, in Garstad, *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius*.

92 O. Prinz, “Eine frühe abendländische Aktualisierung der lateinischen Übersetzung des Pseudo-Methodius,” *DAEM* 41 (1985): 1–23; T. Frenz, “Textkritische Untersuchungen zu ‘Pseudo-Methodios’: Das Verhältnis der griechischen zur ältesten lateinischen Fassung,” *ByzZ* 80 (1987): 50–58; and Michael W. Herren, “The ‘Revelationes’ of Pseudo-Methodius in the Eighth Century,” in *Felici curiositate: Studies in Latin Literature and Textual Criticism from Antiquity to the Twentieth Century in Honour of Rita Beyers*, ed. Guy Guldentops, Christine Laes, and Gert Partoens, IPM 75 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017), 409–18.

93 Lorenzo DiTommaso, “The Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius: Notes on a Recent Edition,” *MEG* 17 (2017): 311–21. The Latin recensions of the Apocalypse were continuously copied for the next 500 years after Adso. It would be interesting to discover whether manuscripts that were copied in the same region preserve distinctive variations in their historical identifications, including the identity of the fourth empire. James T. Palmer and I are preparing a study of the Latin and western vernacular texts and traditions of the Apocalypse based on a fresh examination of the manuscripts. One objective of our study is to chart the regional trajectories of the versions.

94 Aerts and Kortekaas, *Die Apokalypse des Pseudo-Methodius*, 31–35.

“King of the Greeks, that is, the Romans” in the texts of Greek Recension I (βασιλεὺς Ἑλλήνων, ἦτοι Ῥωμαίων) and Latin Recension I (*rex gregorum, siue romanorum*) at 13.11. Matthew Gabriele suggests that the switch indicates a mental shift in the political ideology in the West.⁹⁵ But this and other points must remain provisional pending a comprehensive examination of the manuscripts.

What is clear is that the Frankish kingdoms were a locus of manuscript production of the Latin Apocalypse in the centuries after Charlemagne. This region was also the focus of the *translatio imperii* over the same time, when various Frankish rulers were grafted onto the four kingdom schema as heirs to the Roman Emperors of old.

Sometimes the new stock was of inferior quality. Notker I of St. Gall (ca. 840–912),⁹⁶ saw in the Emperor Charles III (839–888, r. 881–887) a figure greater than his illustrious great-grandfather Charlemagne. Charles was the Danielic head of gold, the progenitor of the new main branch sprouting from the old Roman root.⁹⁷ Yet by the time of his death, the torpid and incompetent Charles had been deposed, Charlemagne’s empire shattered, and the Frankish branch forever divided.

Other Frankish monarchs were made of heartier material. In East Francia, Otto I of Saxony (912–973) was crowned in Rome in the year 962 as Emperor of the Romans and the Franks. The additional title is significant. Otto had unified the German duchies, conquered the Kingdom of Italy, and legitimately could be considered a “savior of Christianity” after crushing the pagan Magyars at Lechfeld.

In 996, Otto I’s sixteen-year-old grandson Otto III (980–1002) was himself crowned “Holy Roman Emperor” (*Sacrum romanum imperium*), again in Rome.⁹⁸ His friend and teacher, Gerbert d’Aurillac (ca. 946–1003), later Pope Sylvester II, phrased the young Emperor’s campaigns in terms of “renewing the Roman empire” (*renouatio imperii romanorum*). Seventy years later, Adam of

95 Matthew Gabriele, *An Empire of Memory: The Legend of Charlemagne, the Franks, and Jerusalem before the First Crusade* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 108–9 (translation mine). See DiTommaso, “The Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius,” 316, for comments.

96 Called Balbulus (“the Stammerer”).

97 *Omnipotens rerum dispositor ordinatorque regnorum et temporum ... alterius non minus admirabilis statue caput aureum per illustrem Karolum erexit in Francis*. Notker, *Gesta*, 1.1 = Hans F. Haefele, ed., *Notker der Stammler, Taten Kaiser Karls des Großen: Notkeri Balbuli Gesta Karoli Magni imperatoris*, MGH SRG (Berlin: Weidmann, 1959), 1. A seal preserved in Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, Munich, depicts Charles III in profile as a Roman emperor. He wears a Roman-style cloak (*pallium*), fastened by a large jewel at the nape, and a laurel wreath encircles his head. The seal bears the inscription KARLOVS MAG[NV]S (“Charles the Great”).

98 David A. Warner, “Ideals and Action in the reign of Otto III,” *JMedHist* 25 (1998): 1–18.

Bremen could argue that the Frankish Germans had inherited Rome's fourth-kingdom status through the Ottonian line.⁹⁹

At the same time, in West Francia, Queen Gerberga (ca. 913/914–969 or 984) asked Adso (ca. 910/920–992), Abbot of the Benedictine monastery of Montier-en-Der, for a précis regarding the nature and expectations surrounding the figure of the Antichrist. Perhaps Gerberga was motivated by the approaching millennial year 1000.¹⁰⁰ Adso's response to the Queen was in the form of a letter, "On the Origin and Time of the Antichrist" (*De ortu et tempore Antichristi*),¹⁰¹ which summarized the data that he had gathered about the appearance, nature, and actions of the expected Son of Perdition.¹⁰² It became one of the most influential apocalyptic works of the Middle Ages in the West.

Although Adso used the Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius, which he knew in its Latin translation, he did not include a record of the history of the world in his reply to the Queen, nor did he pseudonymously ascribe it to an authoritative figure from the past. His letter is not an apocalyptic forecast but a compendium of eschatological traditions. Its contents are sifted, sieved, and sorted like a learned essay and structured like a hagiography.¹⁰³ In this manner, Adso's letter established the model of a *Vita Antichristi* ("Life of the Antichrist") that would persist over the next six centuries, beyond the era of the manuscript and into the age of the early print- and block-books.

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- 99 *Ipse enim, ut in Gestis suis legitur, apostolicae sedis auctoritate fultus, legationem ad gentes suscepit, Teutonumque populos, apud quos nunc et summa imperii Romani et diuini cultus reuerentia uiget ac floret, ecclesiis, doctrina uirtutibusque illustrauit.* Adam of Bremen, *Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum, ex rescensione Lappenbergii*, MGH SS rer. Germ. 1.11 (Hannover: Hahn, 1876), 8. Cf. Len Scales, *The Shaping of German Identity: Authority and Crisis, 1245–1414* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 282, n. 120.
- 100 The year 1000 was an eschatologically auspicious date that may or may not have occasioned great apocalyptic anxiety among Christians. Scholars are of two minds on this matter. Richard Landes is probably the foremost proponent of the view that it did cause much anxiety. See the papers in Richard Landes, Andrew Gow, and David C. Van Meter eds., *The Apocalyptic Year 1000: Religious Expectation and Social Change, 950–1050* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003). A better model accommodates both positions.
- 101 Daniel Verhelst, *Adso Dervensis, De ortu et tempore Antichristi, necnon et tractatus qui ab eo dependunt*, CCCM 45 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1976).
- 102 Richard K. Emmerson, "Antichrist as Anti-Saint: The Significance of Abbot Adso's *Libellus de Antichristo*," *AmBR* 30 (1979): 175–190; and Volker Leppin, "Der Antichrist bei Adso von Montier-en-Der," in *Der Antichrist: Historische und systematische Zugänge*, ed. Mariano Delgado and Volker Leppin (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2011), 125–36.
- 103 R. Konrad, *De ortu et tempore Antichristi: Antichristvorstellung und Geschichtsbild des Abtes Adso von Montier-en-Der* (Kallmünz: M. Lassleben, 1964), esp. 16–25; and Emmerson, "Antichrist as Anti-Saint," *passim*.

Adso hewed to the traditional interpretation of Daniel 2, read in light of the “restraining power” of 2 Thessalonians. Like Notker of St. Gall three generations before him, Adso re-positioned the interpretation in a western sequence that began with Charlemagne’s assumption of the Imperial mantle. Unlike Notker, however, Adso wrote in an era when the Carolingian dream no longer corresponded to political reality. The map of Latin Christendom had changed for Adso and the west Franks, as it had done for Gerbert d’Aurillac and Adam of Bremen among the east Franks.

This change is manifested in Adso’s letter, which was addressed to the Queen of France, not the Pope in Rome or the Emperor in Constantinople. In other words, it was colored by regional circumstances. One such circumstance was Gerberga’s position as the wife of Louis IV, and reflects the self-identity of their court circle and her keen interest in monastic reform, whose champions characterized their opponents as “Antichrists.”¹⁰⁴ It is partly in this context that Adso’s letter must be regarded.

His letter was also part of a co-ordinated effort to normalize Louis’s rule in a period of extraordinary political flux. Adso made explicit the geographic shift that had been implicit in Charlemagne’s coronation by altering the references to the Last Roman Emperor in the Latin Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius to *reges francorum*, that is, the kings of his own West Francia.¹⁰⁵

*Inde ergo dicit Paulus apostolus, Antichristum non antea in mundum esse uenturum, nisi uenerit discessio primum, id est, nisi prius discesserint omnia regna a romano imperio, que pridem subdita erant. Hoc autem tempus nondum uenit, quia, licet uideamus romanum imperium ex maxima parte destructum, tamen, quandiu reges francorum durauerint, qui romanum imperium tenere debent, romani regni dignitas ex toto non peribit, quia in regibus suis stabit.*¹⁰⁶

104 Simon MacLean, “Reform, Queenship and the End of the World in Tenth-Century France: Adso’s ‘Letter on the Origin and Time of the Antichrist’ Reconsidered,” *RBPB* 86 (2008): 645–75.

105 MacLean, “Reform, Queenship,” 103–14, 144–45; and B. Schneidmüller, “Adso von Montier-en-Der und die Frankenkönige,” *Trierer Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Kunst des Trierer Landes und seiner Nachbargebiete* 40/41 (1977/78): 189–99.

106 Text *apud* Verhelst, *Adso Dervensis*, 26 (emphasis original). “Hence the apostle Paul says that the Antichrist will not come into the world unless first comes the falling-away, i.e., unless first all kingdoms fall away from the Roman Empire to which they were long subject. The time has not yet come, because, though we see the Roman empire destroyed in great part, nevertheless as long as the kings of the Franks who hold the empire by right shall last, the dignity of the Roman empire will not totally perish, because it will endure in its kings” (translation McGinn, *Visions of the End*, 86).

And thus the fourth and final world-empire of the schema became located in Western Europe in name as well as in notion.

The gradual transposition of the *translatio imperii* from the East to the West culminated in the twelfth century. One reason for urgency was the papal schism of 1159–1178, which had galvanized the West against incursions from the Byzantines.¹⁰⁷ Another was the Investiture Controversy, which overshadowed politics throughout the last decades of the eleventh century and quickened the development of political identity in the transalpine states, especially in Germany.¹⁰⁸ One should not overlook, either, the superlative quality of the men who held the throne during this period. Paramount here are Friedrich I “Barbarossa” (1122–1190) and his grandson, the Sicilian Friedrich II (1194–1250), surnamed “Stupor Mundi” (“the Wonder of the World”) by his admirers and *preambulus Antichristi* (“forerunner of the Antichrist”) by his enemies.¹⁰⁹ These were Emperors in the mold of Trajan or Marcus Aurelius.

The internal vigor in the western states translated into a newfound sense of identity that was articulated in emergent ethno-nationalisms. The attitude reveals itself in several works, including the *Chronica* of Otto of Freising (Otto Frisingensis, ca. 1114–1158), which was composed in the middle of the twelfth century.¹¹⁰ In his retrospective account of the significance of Charlemagne’s reign, Otto re-directed the *translatio imperii* after Rome and Byzantium to the Holy Roman Empire via Charlemagne: *Igitur Karolus regno romanorum ad francos translato ...* (“And so Charles transferred the reign of the Romans to the Franks ...”).¹¹¹ But Otto’s grander historiographic purpose is evident in his Prologue:

Regnum romanorum, quod in Daniele propter tocius orbis bello domiti singularem principatum, quam greci monarchiam uocant, ferro comparatur,

107 Robert L. Benson, “Political *Renovatio*: Two Models from Roman Antiquity,” in *Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century*, ed. Robert L. Benson and Giles Constable with Carol D. Lanham (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), 339–86 at 370–72; and Goetz, *Translatio imperii*.

108 Scales, *Shaping of German Identity*, 282.

109 Wolfgang Stürner, “Friedrich II. Antichrist und Friedenskaiser,” in *Menschen, die Geschichte geschrieben*, ed. A. Schneider and M. Neumann (Wiesbaden: Marix, 2014), 19–36.

110 Lukas G. Grzybowski, “Fundamentos do poder imperial em meados do século XII: A fortitudo e a *translatio imperii* na obra de Otto de Freising,” *Revista de história, Juiz de Fora* 22 (2016): 69–91; and Jay Rubenstein, *Nebuchadnezzar’s Dream: The Crusades, Apocalyptic Prophecy, and the End of History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 126–40.

111 Otto Frisingensis, *Chronica, siue historia de duabus civitatibus*, book 5, §XXXII, lines 8–9 = Adolfus Hofmeister, *Otonis episcopi frisingensis. Chronica; siue, Historia de duabus civitatibus*, MGH SS rer. Germ. 45 (Hannover; Leipzig: Hahn, 1912), 257 (translation mine).

*ex tot alternationibus, maxime diebus nostris, ex nobilissimo factum est pene nouissimum, ut iuxta poetam uix “magni stet nominis umbra.” Ab Urbe quippe ad grecos, a grecis ad francos, a francis ad lonbardos, a lonbardis rursum ad teutonicos francos deriuatum non solum antiquitate senuit, sed etiam ipsa mobilitate sui ueluti leuis glarea hac illaque aquis circumiecta sordes multiplices ac defectus uarios contraxit. Ostenditur igitur in ipso capite mundi mundi miseria, ipsiusque occasus toti corpori minatur interitum.*¹¹²

The critical phrase here is “from the Franks to the Lombards, and so from the Lombards to the Germanic Franks,” which is emphasized in the quotation. And so, as J. G. A. Pocock observes, “what he [Otto] designed as an Augustinian History *de duabus ciuitatibus* becomes in some measure a history *de translatione imperii*.”¹¹³

This point is underscored in the earliest surviving illustrated manuscript copy of the *Chronica*, which dates from the second half of the thirteenth century. It contains two images that are thematically identical to each other. The first is that of the enthroned Augustus Caesar, the second of the enthroned Emperor Otto I, *teutonicorum rex* (“King of the Teutons”).¹¹⁴ The inference is patent: what had been initiated with the first Roman Emperor is now continued through his Teutonic heirs.

Otto of Freising’s extension of the *translatio* to the Franks is paralleled in the work of his near-contemporary, Frutolf of Michelsberg (d. 1103). As Frutolf asserted in his own *Chronica*, “the Roman Empire remained in Constantinople and was held by the Empire of the Greeks; it was only through Charles that it was transferred to the kings or emperors of the Franks.”¹¹⁵

112 Hofmeister, *Chronica*, 7–8 (emphasis mine).

113 J. G. A. Pocock, *Barbarism and Religion: Volume 3: The First Decline and Fall* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 98.

114 Jena, Thüringer Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek, Bos. q. 6, fols. 38v (Augustus) and 78r (Otto I). For the digitized manuscript, see: https://archive.thulb.uni-jena.de/collections/receive/HisBest_cbu_00019205.

115 Jena, Thüringer Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek, Bos. q. 19 (autograph), fol. 142r. For digitized manuscript, see: https://archive.thulb.uni-jena.de/collections/receive/HisBest_cbu_00028550. Cf. G. Waitz, ed., *Ekkehardi Uraugiensis chronica*, MGH SS 6 (Hannover, 1844), 1–276. See further Hans-Werner Goetz, “The Concept of Time in the Historiography of the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries,” in *Medieval Concepts of the Past: Ritual, Memory, Historiography*, ed. Gerd Althoff, Johannes Fried, and Patrick J. Geary (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 139–66 (translation here Goetz, “The Concept of Time,” 154).

The chronicles of Otto of Freising and Frutolf of Michelsberg reflect the profound changes that were underway in the thirteenth century in Western Europe.¹¹⁶ The 1204 sack of Constantinople greatly reduced the Byzantine Empire, which thereafter became a supporting actor in its own history. The resultant loss of Byzantine prestige on the world stage prompted other groups, including the Armenians and the Syrians, to begin to refer to the Franks, rather than the Byzantines, as the “Romans.”¹¹⁷

At the same time, the evolution of western vernacular languages during this period, and the composition of literature in those languages, as opposed to Latin works that had been inherited from classical antiquity, underwrote the evolution of regional proto-nationalist identities, to which new literary forms such as the chronicles of Otto and Frutolf added necessary historical depth.¹¹⁸ Chronicles and histories not only record group identity, they also create it; rulers and lineages that are excluded from the historical stream are as important as those that are included.¹¹⁹ Those who write history write the present.

116 These changes were so profound that, in my view, the common mediaeval apocalyptic tradition can be divided into two distinct parts, early and late. The limitations of this paper do not permit a full exposition of the subject; see the essays in the second part of DiTommaso and McAllister, eds., *The Common Mediaeval Apocalyptic Tradition* (n. 19, above).

117 Christopher MacEvitt, “True Romans: Remembering the Crusades among Eastern Christians,” *JMedHist* 40 (2014): 260–75. For specific examples, see S. Peter Cowe, “The Reception of the Book of Daniel in Late Ancient and Medieval Armenian Society,” in *The Armenian Apocalyptic Tradition: A Comparative Perspective: Essays Presented in Honor of Professor Robert W. Thompson on His Eightieth Birthday*, ed. Kevork B. Bardakjian and Sergio La Porta, SVTP 25 (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 81–125 at 101–12; Zara Pogossian, “The Last Emperor or the Last Armenian King? Some Considerations on Armenian Apocalyptic Literature from the Cilician Period,” in *The Armenian Apocalyptic Tradition: A Comparative Perspective: Essays Presented in Honor of Professor Robert W. Thompson on His Eightieth Birthday*, ed. Kevork B. Bardakjian and Sergio La Porta, SVTP 25 (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 457–503; and James Hamrick’s contribution to the present volume, on the schema in its mediaeval Ethiopic milieu. For Byzantine examples, see above, nn. 30, 38, 49, 61. In the Sassanid East, the rise of Islam prompted the incorporation of “Ishmael” into the schema in Syriac Christian circles (see the section, “The Apocryphal Daniel Apocalypica and the Syriac Apocalyptic Tradition,” above).

118 One example: Serban Marin, “Venice and *translatio imperii*: The Relevance of the 1171 Event in the Venetian Chronicles’ Tradition,” *Annuario dell’Istituto Romeno di Cultura e Ricerca Umanistica di Venezia* 3 (2001): 45–103.

119 On the application of the *translatio imperii* in diverse states during the later mediaeval centuries, see, most recently Luca D’Ascia, “L’epistola di Papa Pio II a Maometto II, un manifesto in favore della *translatio imperii*,” in *Conferenze su Pio II: nel sesto centenario della nascita di Enea Silvio Piccolomini (1405–2005)*, ed. Enzo Mecacci (Siena: Accademia senese degli intronati, 2006), 13–25; Thomas Wetzstein, “La doctrine de la ‘*translatio imperii*’ et l’enseignement des canonistes médiévaux,” in *Science politique et droit publique*

The final step was to gild these emergent identities with the aura of culture. In the Prologue to his *Cligès* (ca. 1170), Chrétien de Troyes explains how the seat of knowledge had developed in Greece, was transmitted to Rome, and then passed to France. In this fashion the *translatio imperii*—the transmission of political power—became linked with the notion of *translatio studii*—the transmission of cultural power.¹²⁰ In this fusion of political and cultural capital lies the genesis of the conception of the *transfer of civilization* from empire to empire. This is hard-core cultural identity: basically undefinable, often spurious, inevitably hostile to “enemies” on account of its underlying apocalypticism¹²¹—yet immensely powerful and influential in a way that creates stakeholders among every level of society in the group.

The picture of the *translatio imperii* that appears in this section is a sketch, not a full portrait. The story of its application over the first half of the mediaeval millennium is more nuanced. It presents many interesting pathways, and contains more than a few dead-ends. But the basic trajectory, with its roots in the four kingdom schema of Daniel and its trunk consisting of the wood of Rome, is one of progressive embranchment. Its main branch worked its way north-westward, after the passing of the Empire in the West and the emergence of the Carolingian spring, into the Frankish kingdoms. From it developed the idea of “western culture” (and thus “western civilization”) that until the past century was the heart of the notion of “Europe.”

dans les facultés de droit européennes (XIII^e–XVIII^e siècle), ed. Jacques Krynen and Michael Stolleis, SER 229 (Frankfurt: Vittorio Klostermann, 2008), 185–221; Elise Bartosik-Vélez, “*Translatio imperii*: Virgil and Peter Martyr’s Columbus,” *CLS* 46 (2009): 559–88; Luis Fernández Gallardo, “La idea de *translatio imperii* en el Castilla del Bajo medioevo,” *AnEM* 46 (2016): 751–86; Marilyn Desmond, “*Translatio imperii* and the Matter of Troy in Angevin Naples: BL Royal MS 20 D I and Royal MS 6 E IX,” *Italian Studies* 72 (2017): 177–91; and Diane Speed, “*Translatio Imperii* and Gower’s *Confessio Amantis*,” in *Booldly Bot Meekly: Essays on the Theory and Practice of Translation in Honour of Roger Ellis*, ed. Catherine Batt and René Tixie, MT 14 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2018), 379–93.

120 Literally, the “transfer of learning.” Recent studies include A. de Murcia Conesa, “República literaria y *translatio imperii*,” *RP* 21 (2009): 219–32; Katherine A. McLoone, “*Translatio studii et imperii* in Medieval Romance” (PhD diss., University of California at Los Angeles, 2012); Xavier Renedo Puig, “Ciutats, regnes i universitats: ‘translatio studii et imperii’ i història de les ciutats en el ‘Dotzè del Crestià,’” in *El Saber i les llengües vernacles a l’època de Lull i Eiximenis: estudis ICREA sobre vernacularització*, ed. Anna Alberni et al. (Montserrat: Publicacions de l’Abadia, 2012), 81–110; and Enrico Fenzi, “*Translatio studii et translatio imperii*: Appunti per un percorso,” *Interfaces* 1 (2015): 170–208.

121 Lorenzo DiTommaso, “The Apocalyptic Other,” in Daniel C. Harlow et al., eds., *The Other in Second Temple Judaism: Essays in Honor of John J. Collins* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011), 221–46.

4 Conclusions

The uses of the four kingdom schema in these three case-studies illustrate the two main functional modalities, or “voices,” of apocalyptic speculation of the historical type, “revolutionary” and “imperial.”¹²²

The revolutionary (or world-rejecting) voice is most associated with Norman Cohn and his landmark 1957 volume, *The Pursuit of the Millennium*,¹²³ but ultimately relies on a conventional understanding of the settings and purposes of the biblical apocalypses of Daniel and Revelation. In this mode, apocalyptic literature serves as the voice of marginalized and persecuted groups. The eschaton signals the imminent overthrow of the oppressor and the group’s salvation from the present state of affairs.¹²⁴ The apocalyptic platform here is radically utopian, and its writings operate as crisis literature.

The imperial (or world-accepting) voice is most associated with the work of Bernard McGinn,¹²⁵ and was proposed partly as a corrective to Cohn’s argument. Imperial apocalypticism is an expression of the stakeholder elements of a society. It does not proceed from a setting of obvious social disadvantage or the prospect of an imminent and radical upheaval of the present order. The eschatological horizon of the apocalyptic worldview remains in place (as it must), but its urgency and imminence are downplayed or sidetracked in favor of the status quo. The apocalyptic platform here is geared to authority, for which its writings encourage support.

The two voices are often taken to be conflicting but are in fact complimentary.¹²⁶ The key determinant is whether the group for which the apocalyptic revelation is intended considers itself to be located on the outside

122 The information here and in the following paragraphs encapsulates ideas that are expounded in detail in Lorenzo DiTommaso, “Class Consciousness, Group Affiliation, and Apocalyptic Speculation,” in *The Struggle over Class: Socioeconomic Analysis of Ancient Christian Texts*, ed. G. Anthony Keddie, Michael A. Flexsenhar III, and Steven J. Friesen, WGRW (Atlanta: SBL Press, forthcoming 2021). Both modalities are products of mediaeval scholarship, and thus grew out of the field and are not imposed on it. Breed, “History of Reception,” refers to the two voices as “anti-imperial” and “imperial,” but the label “anti-imperial” is not always appropriate in actual cases.

123 Norman Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1957).

124 The means by which the imminent overthrow is understood to come about—violent/activist vs. quietist/passive—is unimportant to this point. See Lorenzo DiTommaso, “Deliverance and Justice: Soteriology in the Book of Daniel,” in *This World and the World to Come: Soteriology in Early Judaism*, ed. Daniel Gurtner, LSTS 74 (London: T&T Clark, 2011), 71–86.

125 McGinn, *Visions of the End*, §15, but in reality *passim*.

126 Magdalino, “The History of the Future,” 29–33. See DiTommaso, “Class Consciousness.”

of society, looking in (or the bottom, looking up), or on the inside, looking out (or the top, looking down). “Inside” and “outside” can refer to economic status, social rank, political class, religious affiliation, and even ethnicity. In practice, though, such metrics are usually bound up together in a group’s “identity,” which is an expression of its self-perception in its own *Sitz im Leben*.

The uses of the four kingdom schema in the early mediaeval centuries reflect both modalities. Marginalized groups tended to apply the schema in its outsider/revolutionary mode. Correlating the final kingdom with the present-day oppressor fixed the group’s location in history, on the cusp of salvation. This usage is common in the Syriac Christian writings discussed above, including the two Syriac Daniel apocalypses and the Syriac original of the Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius.¹²⁷

Stakeholder groups, by contrast, applied the schema in its insider/imperial mode, modulated by the *translatio imperii*, in order to preserve the present order, which they had fought to establish, not overthrow. Identifying the final kingdom with their own rule normalizes their political positions and provides the basis for legitimation and/or social policy. For the Carolingian hierarchy in particular, the eschatological horizon (and its place in it) framed its “larger ambition to reform society and their preoccupation with laying down Christian norms.”¹²⁸

There are, of course, other illustrations of the use of the four kingdom schema in the early mediaeval era, not only in Byzantium¹²⁹ and in the West, but also by Jewish and Islamic groups. It should be recalled, too, that most apocalyptic texts of the period did not employ the schema or, like the Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius, employed a different historiographic framework. This paper simply offers a snapshot of the subject that focuses on three cases, which in turn illustrate a general pattern of social function.

127 We detect the same dynamic in the mediaeval Jewish writings, prompted by the same cause. One opinion held that the fourth and final kingdom remained Rome. Another argued for a hybrid Byzantine Christian/Arab Muslim kingdom. A third view, promulgated by the scholar and exegete Ibn Ezra (1089–ca. 1167), combined Greece and Rome as the third kingdom and identified Muslim rule as the fourth kingdom. See further, Dennis Halft, “Ismā’īl Qazvīnī: A Twelfth-/Eighteenth-Century Jewish Convert to Imāmī Sī’ism and His Critique of Ibn Ezra’s Commentary on the Four Kingdoms (Daniel 2:31–45),” in *Senses of Scripture: Treasures of Tradition: The Bible in Arabic among Jews, Christians, and Muslims*, ed. Miriam Hjälml, BIBA 5 (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 281–304, esp. 289–90.

128 Miriam Czock, “Creating Futures through the Lens of Revelation in the Rhetoric of Carolingian Reform, ca. 750 to ca. 900,” in *Apocalypse and Reform from Late Antiquity to the Middle Ages*, ed. Matthew Gabriele and James T. Palmer (London: Routledge, 2019), 101–19 at 115.

129 Donald M. Nicol, “The Byzantine View of Western Europe,” *GRBS* 8 (1967): 315–39.

The investigation of this paper terminates with the twelfth century,¹³⁰ when the common mediaeval apocalyptic tradition began to disintegrate. The change, which occurred gradually, was the result of several factors. The 1204 sack of Constantinople marginalized the Eastern Empire, as noted. Its effect on the history of Western Europe cannot be underestimated. Yet it would be wrong to conclude that the westward flow of Byzantine apocalyptic material suddenly dried up. In fact the opposite occurred. Greek-speaking nobles and scholars began to stream westward, initially to Venice and Milan, carrying with them the intellectual fruit of centuries of Byzantine thought, including apocalyptic prophecies.¹³¹

The real locomotive for change was located in the West itself, where from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries onwards, the dissolution of the mediaeval apocalyptic tradition occurred. The catalyst was the emergence of regional cultures that defined themselves by a shared language, literature, and sense of the past, as discussed above.¹³² In grossly simplistic terms, we are talking about the embryonic forms of linguistically distinctive nation-states (or national cultures) of Europe and the formation of regional/national identity. New apocalyptic writings sought to interpret the past in light of a present-day setting that was increasingly relevant to specific ethno-political groups.

None of this altered the overall historical-eschatological tenor of mediaeval apocalyptic speculation.¹³³ If anything, there was an increase in the number of prophetic-style writings,¹³⁴ mainly because they were now being composed in vernacular languages as well as Latin. Even so, different kinds of material emerged, not only the chronicles of Otto of Freising and Frutolf of Michelsberg as described, but also agglomerate hagiographies such the *Legenda Aurea* of 1260, cycles of mystery plays, Peter Comestor's *Historia Scholastica* (ca. 1250),

130 See Brennan Breed's contribution to the present volume, on the subject of the four kingdom schema in the late mediaeval era.

131 Kenneth M. Setton, "The Byzantine Background to the Italian Renaissance," *PAPS* 100 (1956): 1–76, at 72–76; and Donald M. Nicol, *Byzantium and Venice: A Study in Diplomatic and Cultural Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 418–19. The Greek Oracles of Leo the Wise, for example, was reworked into a sequence of popes both historical and eschatological. Several varieties are known, and the collective title for these is *Vaticinia de summis pontificibus*, or "pope prophecies," were a frequent vehicle for anti-papal discontent in the period before the Protestant Reformation.

132 See the section above, "Translatio imperii and the West in the Early Mediaeval Centuries."

133 That being said, the number of "otherworldly" apocalyptic texts (typically in the form of visionary journeys) also began to increase. The *Tractatus de purgatorio sancti Patrici* and the *Visio Thugdali* both date from the second half of the twelfth century.

134 The corpus of these works is large and has not yet been adequately mapped, nor have its parts been coherently related to the social changes of the era.

and the *Bible Historiale* (ca. 1297) and its later variations. Manuscript illumination, too, flourished during this period, as did other graphic and plastic arts, from wall frescos to paintings to stained glass. In all cases, apocalyptic tropes such as the four kingdom schema were deployed to serve new concerns in these media.¹³⁵

The second half of the twelfth century also saw the introduction of a powerful historiographic framework that was promulgated Joachim of Fiore. His three-age schema offered a strikingly original framework by which history and its predestined outcome could be organized, and was influential in the Latin west.¹³⁶

At the end of the tenth century, Adso de Montier-en-Der could compile a biography of the Antichrist, written in Latin. His work would have been intelligible to any Latin theologian and, *mutatis mutandis*, to any of his counterparts in Orthodox Christendom, Judaism, and Islam. Six centuries later, by the time of the European Wars of Religion, competing regional historiographies, each requiring its own place in the *translatio imperii* and its special version of history, and now powered by an expansionist drive that would translate into the colonization of the globe, would render the ideal of a truly universal Christian salvation-history virtually impossible.

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135 Cf. Lorenzetti's *L'Allegoria ed effetti del buono e del cattivo governo*, in the Palazzo Pubblico in Siena, where Satan (and the notion of metaphysical evil) is correlated with civic government rather than morals or a theological stance.

136 See Marjorie Reeves, *The Influence of Prophecy in the Later Middle Ages: A Study in Joachimism*, 2nd ed. (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1993), among many other studies.

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The Four Kingdom Schema and the Seventy Weeks in the Arabic Reception of Daniel

Miriam L. Hjälms

1 Introduction*

Throughout the ages, Jews, Christians, and Muslims have used the periodization motifs in the book of Daniel to interpret past, present and future events and to understand their own place within sacred history. For most Christian commentators in patristic times, the four different materials representing four *successive* kingdoms, which comprised the statue in Daniel 2, were identified as Babylonia, Media-Persia, Greece, and Rome.¹ The stone that grew into a mountain and shattered all previous kingdoms was identified as Christ and his kingdom, the eternal Church. Further east, the flexibility of the four kingdoms motif was put to the test when the *people of the book*² were subjected by yet another empire, one none of the patristic interpreters had imagined. In the wake of the Arab victories over Byzantium, the interpretation of the kingdoms was thus often adapted.³ In the Syriac Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius the interpretation of the final kingdom was expanded to include the Greek, the Roman, and the Byzantine empires with a reference to the Kushites. This final kingdom waged war with Islam and defeated it.⁴ In another Syriac tract, the four kingdoms were identified with Rome, Persia, Media, and finally the

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1 For the dominance of this interpretation as well as minority views, see Pier Franco Beatrice, "Pagans and Christians on the Book of Daniel," *StPatr* 25 (1991): 27–45; Brennan W. Breed, "History of Reception," in *Daniel: A Commentary*, by Carol A. Newsom with Brennan W. Breed, OTL (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2014), 85–97, 243–52, 309–20, here 85. See also the discussion on Daniel 7 below.

2 The term is used for Jews and Christians in the Qurʾān, including suras 29:46 and 3:113.

3 See for instance Wido van Peursen, "Daniel's Four Kingdoms in the Syriac Tradition," in *Tradition and Innovation in Biblical Interpretation: Studies Presented to Professor Eep Talstra on the Occasion of his Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, ed. W. Th. van Peursen and J. W. Dyk, SSN 57 (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 189–207.

4 See Michael Philip Penn, *When Christians First Met Muslims: A Sourcebook of the Earliest Syriac Writings on Islam* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2015), 108–29. For studies and related narratives, see also Lutz Greisiger, "The Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius [Syriac]," in *Christian-Muslim Relations: A Bibliographical History*, vol. 1: 600–900, ed. D. Thomas and B. Roggema (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 1163–71.

Muslim empire.⁵ In a Coptic-Arabic recension of Daniel, the source text itself was expanded by the addition of a chapter in which Islamic rulers are included in the schema—a topic to which we will return.

Still awaiting their messiah, Jews typically identified the stone “cut without hands” with the messianic kingdom as well and their interpretations of the four kingdoms were just as flexible as those of their Christian peers. The prolific Jewish Rabbanite scholar Saadiah Gaon (d. 942 CE) and his near contemporary, the Karaite intellectual Yefet ben Eli, both reinterpreted the model by subsuming the Muslim caliphate under the Roman-Byzantine Christian empire to represent the fourth kingdom: the iron in Dan 2:40–43 is identified with Rome/Byzantine and the clay with the Arabs—according to Yefet a bifurcation supported by the words “the [fourth] kingdom shall be divided.” Yet a different solution was offered by Ibn Ezra (d. 1167 CE) who merged the chronologically more distant Greeks and Romans/Byzantines into a third empire which allowed him to interpret the fourth kingdom as the Muslim empire.⁶

Though the book of Daniel is only rarely—if at all—referenced in the Qurʾān,⁷ the hero and some of the narratives soon made it into Islam and its periodization models have continuously been used as time-structuring devices.⁸ Just as Christian interpreters had found Christ predicted in the book of Daniel, so Muslim interpreters found in the same texts a prediction of Muhammad.⁹ For example, Ibn Ḥazm (d. 1064 CE) argued that the small stone that pulverized all previous kingdoms was a reference to Muhammad.¹⁰ In the

5 I.e., *The Apocalypse of John the Little*. See Penn, *When Christians First Met Muslims*, 146–55.

6 Yefet ben ʿEli, *A Commentary on the Book of Daniel by Yepheth Ibn Ali the Karaite*, ed. and trans. D. S. Margoliouth (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1889), 12–14 [Arabic N.B. 27–31]; Saadiah Gaon, *The Book of Daniel: The Commentary of R. Saadia Gaon: Edition and Translation*, ed. and trans. J. Alobaidi (Bern: Lang, 2005), 446–56. For Ibn Ezra and other Jewish interpreters of the four kingdom schema under Muslim rule, see Breed, “History of Reception,” 93–95. The incorporation of the Muslim empire into the schema is traceable to earlier tracts, such as *Pirqe Rabbi Eliezer* 28 and the eighth-century liturgical poet Pinhas the Priest (Breed, “History of Reception,” 93–94).

7 Cf. the parallels identified in Gabriel S. Reynolds, *The Qurʾān and the Bible: Text and Commentary* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018), *passim*.

8 See for instance Lorenzo DiTommaso, *Book of Daniel and the Apocryphal Daniel Literature*, SVTP 20 (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 171–79; and Breed, “History of Reception,” 251–52.

9 On Muslim readings of the Bible, see Martin Accad, “Muḥammad’s Advent as the Final Criterion for the Authenticity of the Judeo-Christian Tradition: Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya’s *Hidāyat al-ḥayārā fi ajwibat al-yahūd wa-ʿl-naṣārā*,” in *The Three Rings: Textual Studies in the Historical Dialogue of Judaism, Christianity and Islam*, ed. B. Roggema, M. Poorthuis, and P. Valkenberg (Leuven: Peeters, 2005), 217–36.

10 See Ibn Ḥazm (d. 1064 CE) in Camilla Adang, *Muslim Writers on Judaism and the Hebrew Bible: From Ibn Rabban to Ibn Hazm*, IPTS 22 (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 160–61.

eighteenth century, the Shi'ah Muslim Ismā'il Qazvīnī identified the fourth kingdom as Rome and the pre-Islamic Arab kingdoms and the kingdom "that shall never be destroyed" (Dan 2:44) as the Islamic empire.¹¹

The examples above represent only scattered glimpses into the rich and varied reception of Daniel and Danielic motifs under Muslim rule. Through converts, polemics, and candid inquiry, literary motifs and philosophical ideas easily traversed confessional borders and were adapted to fit new worldviews. Since much of the literary heritage of Christian Arabic-speakers remains largely uncharted, a treasury of inter-religious interaction and conceptual redesign is yet to be unveiled. No early Christian Arabic commentary on Daniel has come down to us. Thus, in the present chapter, we will mainly focus on three selected chronological interpretations as reflected in translations of Daniel composed by and for Christian Arabic-speakers in pre-modern times: firstly, the identification of the four kingdoms in Daniel 7; secondly, the associations of these kingdoms with historical empires in the addition of a fourteenth vision incorporated into the canonical version of Daniel; and thirdly, the interpretation of the "seventy weeks of years" in Dan 9:24–27.

The brief glance offered in these three examples indicates how readily history was re-written in the intertwined processes of conceptualizing history and making biblical narratives relevant to new socio-historical settings. Though the four kingdom schema has been used extensively throughout the ages to periodize history, many Bible commentators in late antique and mediaeval times also spent a disproportional amount of attention on these four verses in Dan 9:24–27. This passage, which concerns the coming of the messiah and the seal of prophecy, assumes a prominent position in the sources of the present study as well. Thus, though the interpretations of "the seventy weeks of years" do not deepen our understanding of the kingdom motif as such, it does offer us further insights into the importance of sacred history in the multi-religious environment of the Near East. Both Jews and Christians engaged in historical speculation based on the biblical narratives, yet the chronology in the Septuagint sometimes deviates from that in the Masoretic text (cf. the genealogical lists in Genesis 5 and 11). Although this discovery was not new, the deviations became painfully evident as these different versions began to circulate in the same language, Arabic, and were consulted by Muslims, who by the ninth century believed that the Qur'an offered a rival version (or

11 Dennis Halft, "Ismā'il Qazvīnī: A Twelfth/Eighteenth-Century Jewish Convert to Imāmī Šī'ism and His Critique of Ibn Ezra's Commentary on the Four Kingdoms (Daniel 2:31–45)," in *Senses of Scripture, Treasures of Tradition: The Bible in Arabic among Jews, Christians and Muslims*, ed. M. L. Hjälms, BibAr 5 (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 280–304, here 290.

interpretation) of the narratives in the Jewish and Christian scriptures. When pertinent, therefore, we will also make reference to Judeo-Arabic commentaries as well as an early Christian Arabic historiography and thereby let the larger context shed light on the Arabic translations under our scope.

2 Christian Arabic Translations of Daniel

By the ninth century, substantial parts of the Bible had been rendered into Arabic by Christians in the Near East.¹² The early production focused in particular on making the biblical books used in Christian liturgy available to an Arabic-speaking audience. As a consequence, there is a notable overrepresentation of the Gospels, Pauline Epistles, and the Psalms.¹³ Prior to the invention of the printing press and Western missionary activities in the sixteenth century, when complete Bibles in Arabic began to be produced, the disproportionate production of these three kinds of texts remained unaltered.¹⁴ It is surprising, therefore, that Arabic translations of Daniel, which did not feature significantly in the Byzantine liturgy, are so prominent in the textual record of the first centuries of Christian Arabic literature.¹⁵ From the ninth to the fourteenth centuries, at least five different versions of Daniel appeared.¹⁶

12 Although primarily spurred by the general linguistic transition to Arabic among Near Eastern Christians, I agree with Sidney H. Griffith's suggestion that the impetus behind Arabic Bible translations was also the collection of the Qur'an in the middle of the seventh century, as a means to "set the biblical record straight in Arabic," *The Bible in Arabic: The Scriptures of the "People of the Book," in the Language of Islam* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013), 53. The earliest extant witnesses date to the ninth century and their original compositions can be traced back to the last part of the eighth century with some confidence. Any earlier date of origin is speculative, Miriam L. Hjälms, "Arabic Palaeography," in *Textual History of the Bible*, ed. A. Lange and Emanuel Tov, BrillOnline ed. (Leiden: Brill, forthcoming), ch. 4.1.3.2.11. A longer version is available in Miriam L. Hjälms, "A Paleographical Study of Early Christian Arabic Manuscripts," *Collectanea Christiana Orientalia* 17 (2020): 37–77.

13 Hjälms, "Arabic Palaeography." See there an update of early manuscripts and relevant bibliography vis-à-vis the standard work on Christian Arabic literature: Georg Graf, *Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur*, 5 vols (Città del Vaticano: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1944–1953), vol. 1.

14 For recent overviews, see Miriam L. Hjälms, "Arabic Texts," in *Textual History of the Bible*, ed. F. Feder and M. Henze, BrillOnline ed. (Leiden: Brill, forthcoming), ch. 1.2.12; Ronny Vollandt, *Arabic Versions of the Pentateuch: A Comparative Study of Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Sources* (Leiden: Brill, 2015).

15 Miriam L. Hjälms, *Christian Arabic Versions of Daniel: A Comparative Study of Early MSS and Translation Techniques in MSS Sinai Ar. 1 and 2, BibAr 4* (Leiden: Brill, 2016).

16 Hjälms, *Christian Arabic Versions*, 43–45.

Early witnesses to these versions, which we will discuss in more detail below, are found in the following manuscripts:¹⁷

Arab ^{Syr1*}	MSS: 9th-c. Sinai Ar. 1; 10th-c. Sinai Ar. 513; Sinai Ar. 597, d. 1002 CE ¹⁸
Arab ^{Heb1}	MS: Sinai Ar. 2, d. 939/40 CE
Arab ^{Syr2}	MS: Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Diez A fol. 41, d. 1325 CE ¹⁹
Arab ^{Syr3}	MS: 12th-c. Sinai Ar. 539*
Arab ^{Gr1}	MS: London, British Library, Or. 1314, d. 1373/4 CE

3 The Four Kingdoms in Daniel Chapter 7

The manuscripts making Arab^{Syr1*} are heterogeneous and only partly related to one another.²⁰

Arabic translators often struggled with—or took advantage of—the wealth of biblical *Vorlagen*, especially in Greek and Syriac, available to them. As a result, interpretations in Arabic texts do not necessarily fall into the expected ecclesial corrals and these Daniel translations are no exception. In many patristic commentaries in Greek and Latin, the four kingdoms in Daniel 7 are equated with those in Daniel 2, which were usually thought to be the historical kingdoms of Babylonia, Medio-Persia, Greece, and Rome. The third kingdom, which in the vision of Daniel 7 is depicted as a leopard, is identified as Greece and its four wings typically represent the four kings that inherited Alexander

17 According to Löfgren, another tenth- or eleventh-century witness from Arab^{Syr1*} is attested in Oxford, Bodleian Libraries, Fraser (Or.) 257. See Oscar Löfgren, *Studien zu den arabischen Danielübersetzungen mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der christlichen Texte nebst einem Beitrag zur Kritik des Peschitatextes* (Uppsala: Lundequistska bokhandeln, 1936), 54. The classification above (e.g., Arab^{Syr2}) indicates the primary *Vorlage* (in superscript) followed by version in chronological order. An asterisk indicates that text witnesses are only loosely related in the group or that a specific manuscript exhibits notable variations in relation to other witnesses in the same group. In addition to these groups, the tenth-century Sinai Ar. NF Parchment 18 contains a version of Daniel but the leaves are glued together and cannot be identified.

18 Hjälms, *Christian Arabic Versions*; for an earlier date for Sinai Ar. 597, see Alexander Treiger, “From Theodore Abū Qurra to Abed Azrié: The Arabic Bible in Context,” in *Senses of Scripture, Treasures of Tradition: The Bible in Arabic among Jews, Christians and Muslims*, ed. M. L. Hjälms, BibAr 5 (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 11–57, 42.

19 The last six chapters are missing in the earliest witness to this family, Sinai Ar. NF Paper 9 (ca. tenth–eleventh centuries) and large parts are missing in the thirteenth-century manuscript Sinai Ar. 9, including Daniel 7. Hjälms, *Christian Arabic Versions*, 36–38; 65–66.

20 For their interrelations, see Hjälms, *Christian Arabic Versions*, 56–62.

the Great's kingdom. By this logic, the fourth animal with ten horns is Rome and the eleventh horn is the Antichrist, who is yet to come. However, in the Syriac tradition (cf. Ephrem the Syrian, d. 373 CE and many Peshitta manuscripts) the kingdoms are more often identified as Babylonia, Media, Persia, and Greece.²¹ Thus, from that perspective the Antichrist had already come and was identified as Antiochus Epiphanes IV (d. 164 BCE), the persecutor of the Jews and defiler of the temple. A similar interpretation was advocated by the Neoplatonic philosopher Porphyry (d. 305 CE), but rejected by Jerome (d. 420 CE) on the grounds that he believed that Antichrist was yet to appear and would only do so when Rome had fallen into the hands of ten kings. For Jerome, Porphyry's interpretation further needed to be opposed since it questioned the predictive character of the passages: Porphyry argued that the author of Daniel lived during the time of Antiochus and "did not foretell the future so much as he related the past."²²

Because the same Arabic Bible translations and biblical *Vorlagen* often circulated in various Christian communities, it may be difficult to identify the ecclesial identity of the texts. Although most Arabic translations of Daniel in Arab^{Syr1}* can be traced to the Greek (*Rūm*) Orthodox/Melkite community in Palestine on paleographical grounds, the Syriac *Vorlagen* they consulted left traces and sometimes resulted in interpretations that would have seemed foreign or even objectionable to the community a few centuries earlier. In its description of the kingdom schema in Daniel 7, Sinai Ar. 1 (fols. 21a–22a) includes the interpretive additions that are inserted and marked as rubrics in many manuscripts of the Peshitta, and thus identifies the lion as the kingdom of the Babylonians (Dan 7:3–4), the bear as the kingdom of the Medians (Dan 7:4–5), the leopard as the kingdom of the Persians (7:5–6), and the fourth animal as the kingdom of the Greeks (Dan 7:6–7).²³ The small horn is marked as Antiochus (7:8). In Sinai Ar. 513 (fols. 333b–336b), these references appear as well. While in Sinai Ar. 513, these historical identifications are syntactically

21 Some Jews and some Syriac Christians read the Maccabees into the vision, see Breed, "History of Reception," 243–44.

22 St. Jerome, *Jerome's Commentary on Daniel*, trans. Gleason L. Archer (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2009), 15. As long as the reader believed that Daniel received his prophecies during Babylonian and Persian times, there was no need to question the prophetic nature of Daniel's vision. It is in this light that we should understand the Syriac tradition.

23 For the interpretive additions added in the Peshitta, see Anthony Gelston, ed., *The Old Testament in Syriac according to the Peshitta Version: Part III. Fasc. 4, Dodekapropheton-Daniel-Bel-Draco* (Leiden: Brill, 1980), iv; 27–30; van Peursen, "Daniel's Four Kingdoms in the Syriac Tradition," 195–99. Unlike the Syriac additions which are in the form of rubrics preceding the appearance of the animals, the Arabic reference in Sinai Ar. 1 seems to point backward; probably due to a scribal mistake.

more integrated into the running text, certain parts of them (typically the sequential numberings) are marked in red, apparently to indicate their rubrical nature.²⁴ In a similar manner, the words “and he is Antiochus” are incorporated into the text and marked in red. In contrast to Sinai Ar. 1, Sinai Ar. 513 adds “and that is Messiah” to the end of Dan 7:14 (which is not in the received Syriac text) in reference to “the son of man” who comes with the clouds of heaven. In the next manuscript, Sinai Ar. 597 (fols. 19a–21a), three of the four beasts²⁵ as well as Antiochus and the messiah are also identified with these historical kingdoms and figures, yet these passages are moved into the margins of the manuscript and are thus clearly set apart from the running text. The copyist must have been aware of the fact that these inclusions were not part of his community’s preferred *Vorlage*²⁶ yet did not oppose the Syriac flavored interpretation he found in it. In the margin of the same manuscript (fol. 20b), the horn which springs up and displaces three of the ten horns and persecutes the saints in Dan 7:20–21 is identified as the Antichrist: *al-qarn al-ṣaghīr huwa al-Masīḥ al-dajjāl* (“the little horn is the Antichrist”), where the Syriac renders “Antiochus.” Given the identification of the Antichrist with Antiochus in Dan 7:8, “Antichrist” is probably a reference to Antiochus here too rather than referring to the Antichrist who is to come at the end of times. Yet perhaps this sudden change of vocabulary reflects the memory of what used to be the standard interpretation of the kingdom schema within the Byzantine communities, where the last kingdom is Rome and the eleventh horn the Antichrist who is yet to come. Thus, it appears that Antiochus, besides being the historical referent of the biblical text, also becomes a type of the Antichrist in the end of days and anticipates his coming rather than replacing him.

Just as in our previous three witnesses, the earliest manuscript of the next Syriac-based version, Arab^{Syr}2, also contain the same historical interpretations

24 Not only the original rubrics but also running text units are sometimes marked in red, such as “then I saw a throne be placed and the Ancient of Days sat down” (Dan 7:9) seemingly in order to draw attention to them. The first kingdom is introduced as “that is, the kingdom of Babylon is the first one since it is [similar to a lion],” the second merely as “and the second is the Median kingdom,” the third as “and the third is the Persian kingdom,” and the fourth as “and the fourth is [that of] the Greeks.”

25 The identification of the second animal/kingdom is missing.

26 Presumably, it was written in Greek, as there are some Grecisms in the rendition. For instance, Greek nominative endings are sometimes added to originally Syriac terms, see Hjälms, *Christian Arabic Versions*, 85. On a different note, the Arabic transcription of *ʿAz[ʿ]īl* here should rather be read *Ghabrī[ʿ]el*, i.e., a transcription of the Syriac text (yet G > Gh) which seems to have been chosen rather than the expected Islamic adaptation of the name, i.e., *Jibrīl*. Cf. fol. 32b in the manuscript.

marked in red or added in the margins.²⁷ Although its provenance is uncertain, this version was later revised and used among the Copts and probably also by the *Rūm* Orthodox communities, who thus adopted these historical interpretations as well.²⁸ The earliest extant sample of the third Syriac-based version, Arab^{Syr3}, likewise contains the historical interpretations, in this case marked by an asterisk.²⁹

In pre-Islamic patristic times, the identification of the fourth kingdom with the Greek empire and the Antichrist with Antiochus IV appear to be largely restricted to Syriac or even profane interpreters (e.g., Porphyry) and not even all Syriac authors appear to agree. Aphrahat's (d. ca. 345 CE) interpretations resemble those of the West and as noted above, the final kingdom was interpreted as an amalgam of the Greek, Roman, and Byzantine empires in the Syriac Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius and elsewhere as the Muslim kingdom. In addition, both Saadia and Yefet sided with the Greek and Latin tradition in that they identified the third kingdom with the Greek empire. Thus, in view of this evidence, we may conclude that what used to be a minority view in pre-Islamic times had become the dominant interpretation of the four kingdoms in the *Rūm* Orthodox communities of the ninth to twelfth centuries and around this time also among the Copts, at least in Arabic Daniel translations. As suggested above, this change of historical perspective was in all likelihood facilitated by the widespread availability of various *Vorlagen* and Arabic translations to different Christian groups. Yet, the reason these Christian Arabic translators and copyists, regardless of confessional tradition, chose the Syriac pattern of interpretation might not simply be a consequence of common access to the same corpus of texts. In Islamic times, this interpretation conveniently moved focus away from the relation between the Roman/Byzantine empires and Islam and the latter's place within the schema. Perhaps this motivated scribes to preserve the historical interpretations in these three widespread Arabic versions even when copyists were aware that they were not part of the community's primary biblical *Vorlage*.

27 I.e., MS Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Diez A fol. 41. dated 1325 CE (fols. 247b–248b).

28 Löfgren, *Studien*, 9–14. This version exhibits characteristics similar to the translation of Jeremiah ascribed to a certain Pethion, perhaps of East Syriac origin. It is often argued that this translator is the same Pethion as that mentioned in the tenth-century *Fihrist* of Ibn Nadīm. The identification is nevertheless questionable (Miriam L. Hjälms, "The Major Prophets in Arabic: The Authorship of Pethion Revisited in Light of New Finding," in *Senses of Scripture, Treasures of Tradition: The Bible in Arabic among Jews, Christians and Muslims*, ed. M. L. Hjälms [Leiden: Brill, 2017], 448–83). See also Alin Suciu, "Textual History of Jeremiah's Prophecy to Pashur," in *Textual History of the Bible*, ed. F. Feder and M. Henze, BrillOnline ed. (Leiden: Brill, forthcoming), ch. 2.5.1.

29 For more on this version, see Löfgren, *Studien*, 49–54.

Be that as it may, as we have already seen in the introduction to this chapter, the flexibility of the kingdom motif motivated communities in the Near East to adapt the model in several directions and the same denominations interpreted the fourth kingdom in a variety of ways. In various genres, the Islamic empire was increasingly incorporated into the schema and a number of apocalyptic texts reflecting Danielic motifs appeared. Our next example, however, took one step further and added to the biblical text itself.

4 The Fourteenth Vision of Daniel: The Kingdom Motif Expanded

In one recension of the only Greek-based version of Daniel, Arab^{Gr1a}, the Danielic corpus is expanded with an additional narrative, known as the *Fourteenth Vision of Daniel*.³⁰ This apocalyptic text, which was transmitted in both Coptic and Arabic, has recently received a great deal of attention and there is no need to recapitulate all the fruits of these studies here.³¹ Suffice it to say, according to Jos van Lent, the original version of the *Fourteenth Vision* appears to be lost yet historical references in the extant manuscripts allow us to date it to the early Abbasid era, possibly around 760 CE.³² Other scholars, including Lorenzo DiTommaso, point out that the version of the *Fourteenth Vision* available to us today might have been composed around the eleventh century or later.³³ It appears that the original version was in Coptic or possibly Greek and the Arabic version is, therefore, a translation.³⁴ As Samuel Rubenson has shown, the Copts began to use Arabic around the tenth and eleventh centuries and that by the fourteenth century, it had become their preferred literary language.³⁵ The earliest extant Arabic witness to the *Fourteenth*

30 Hjälms, *Christian Arabic Versions*, 53–54.

31 An edition of the Arabic text with a German translation is available in Carl H. Becker, “Das Reich der Ismaeliten im koptischen Danielbuch,” *Nachrichten von der königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, philologisch-historische Klasse* (1916): 7–57. For a more extensive bibliography, see DiTommaso, *Book of Daniel*, 456–58 and Jos van Lent, “The Proto-Fourteenth Vision of Daniel,” in *Christian-Muslim Relations: A Bibliographical History*, vol. 1: 600–900, ed. D. Thomas and B. Roggema (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 1309–13. There an edition and English translation is promised in Jos van Lent, “Coptic apocalyptic writings from the Islam period” (PhD diss., Leiden University) listed as forthcoming.

32 van Lent, “The Proto-Fourteenth Vision of Daniel.”

33 See the discussion in DiTommaso, *Book of Daniel*, 179–84.

34 DiTommaso, *Book of Daniel*, 180.

35 Samuel Rubenson, “The Transition from Coptic to Arabic,” *EMA* 27–28 (1996): 77–91; and idem, “Translating the Tradition. Aspects on the Arabization of the Patristic Heritage in Medieval Egypt,” *ME* 2 (1996): 4–14.

Vision, MS London, British Library, Or. 1314 (fols. 240a–251b), is dated to this time: 1373/4 CE.³⁶ The translation of the canonical parts of Daniel Arab^{Gr1} is attributed to a certain *al-ʿAlam al-Iskandari*.³⁷ Oscar Löfgren worked out the stemmatic relationship between the manuscripts of Arab^{Gr1}, and suggested that the *Fourteenth Vision* was appended to this Arabic version of Daniel when the canonical version was revised according to a Coptic *Vorlage* (cf. fol. 252a), which he claims took place before 1350 CE.³⁸ However, as the earliest witness to Arab^{Gr1} is the London manuscript, we cannot entirely rule out that the apocalypse was originally not a part of the translation or its early reception and later removed from what became the standard recension of Arab^{Gr1}.³⁹

It is well known that the apocalyptic genre was popular among Near Eastern Christians, and Daniel served as a source of inspiration for a range of Daniel *legenda*.⁴⁰ The juxtaposition of biblical and non-biblical texts is also common, at least in the early manuscripts.⁴¹ What is extraordinary with the *Fourteenth Vision* is not the composition itself but that it was sporadically incorporated into the biblical corpus where it was marked as the last of fourteen chapters. In the London manuscript, it follows Bel and the Dragon.

In imitation of Dan 10:1, the apocalypse commences with the words “In the third year of Kyros the Persian, who became king over Babylon, was a word made known to Daniel whose name is Baltashassar, and the word is true.” Daniel then informs us in the first person that he fasted from meat and wine and did not use oil for twenty-one days and that he received the vision while standing at the river *al-Dijla* (i.e., the Tigris), which is a repetition of Dan 10:2–4. The narrative is then copied almost word for word from Dan 7:2–8 and repeats the narrative of the four animals and eleven horns that emerged from the fourth horrifying animal. In the *Fourteenth Vision*, Daniel sees another eight

36 For additional manuscripts, see van Lent, “The Proto-Fourteenth Vision of Daniel,” 1:311; cf. n. 38 below.

37 For a summary of previous research and new findings regarding this version of the canonical Daniel, see Hjälms, *Christian Arabic Versions*, 23–32.

38 For a stemmatic relationship of the manuscripts (not all of them include the *Fourteenth Vision*), see Löfgren, *Studien*, 27; reproduced in Hjälms, *Christian Arabic Versions*, 32.

39 It is generally assumed that al-ʿAlam was active in or around the tenth century, as we are told that the translator used an old Greek majuscule text as his *Vorlage*. This information was perhaps added to give the translation authority. In general, old biblical texts may have been available long after they were composed or ceased to be used. The juxtaposition of biblical and non-biblical books was quite common in the early stage of Arabic Bible production (ninth–tenth century), which suggests to me an early rather than a late provenance.

40 See DiTommaso, *Book of Daniel*.

41 Hjälms, “Arabic Texts.”

emerging after the first eleven so that all together, nineteen horns grew out of the animal. Daniel sees an angel and falls, frightened, to the ground but is raised up and the vision is explained to him (cf. Dan. 8:15–19a). The first animal, a lioness,⁴² represents Persia, a kingdom which will dominate the world for five hundred and fifty-five years. The second animal symbolizes Rome (*al-Rūm*), which will march against Ethiopia (*al-Ḥabasha*) and rule the earth for eight hundred and eleven years. The third empire is that of *al-Alānniyūna* (i.e., the Hellenistic world), which will rule for one thousand years and thirty days. The fourth kingdom represents the sons of Ismael, and nineteen Muslim kings will rule until the end of the world. The description of the Islamic kings that follows is related to a number of historical events depicted in an obscure and oblique way reminiscent of the style of Daniel 11. Some scholars have identified the seventeenth king as Marwān II (r. 744–50 CE), the last Umayyad Caliph, and the eighteenth king subsequently as al-Saffāḥ (r. 750–54 CE), the first ‘Abbasid caliph.⁴³ The nineteenth, presumably fictional, king is born of a Muslim father and a Roman/Byzantine mother (*al-Rūm*). According to the vision, this evil king is eventually attacked by a foreign people called “the Turks.” After a war so fierce that the water of the river became undrinkable due to all the blood that ran into it, he falls into their hands in the Egyptian city of Ashmūn. The Romans/Byzantines seize control over Egypt but soon the people of Gog and Magog arise and with them the Antichrist (*ḍidd al-Masīḥ*) who kills Enoch⁴⁴ and Elijah. Partly reminiscent of Daniel 7, the “Ancient of Days,” who looks like a “son of man,” finally appears on the clouds of heaven. He raises up Enoch and Elijah from the dead and defeats the Antichrist. Echoing the end of Daniel 8, Daniel is then told to seal up the vision “because this is the end of all things.”

The juxtaposition of the canonical chapters of Daniel and this new composition was likely motivated by their thematic parallels. As remarkable as it may seem today, the inclusion of the *Fourteenth Vision* among the canonical chapters thus follows the same logic that motivated the incorporation of the Additions in Daniel 3, and the additions of Bel and the Dragon and the story of Susanna to this biblical book centuries before. The fact that the twelve proto-canonical chapters of Daniel appear to be a collection of stories and visions from different sources virtually invite such additions.

42 Arabic *labwa*, cf. the Septuagint which understands the Hebrew *hā’* in *’aryēh* as a feminine marker.

43 van Lent, “The Proto-Fourteenth Vision of Daniel,” 1:310.

44 The manuscript is defective, but Enoch is named in the Coptic version (DiTommaso, *Book of Daniel*, 181).

Around the twelfth century, attention paid to the historical sense and literary structure of the Bible seemingly caused yet another alteration in this elastic composition. In Arab^{Syr}3, the story of Susanna, in which Daniel is portrayed as a young man, is integrated into Daniel 1 and placed between Dan 1:2 and 1:3, that is right after the reader is told that the Jews are brought into Babylonian captivity and before Daniel and his friends are summoned to the king's court.⁴⁵

The examples offered so far indicate that the Arabic-speaking Coptic communities were exceptionally liberal both in terms of their view of canonicity and *Vorlage* adherence. The latter is true at least also for *Rūm* Orthodox communities in the Palestinian area. The multitude of available *Vorlagen* in many Eastern Christian communities offered a treasure store of exegetical possibilities. However, in other contexts this richness caused problems. In stark contrast to the above examples, the richness of traditions led to an unprecedented focus on the literal level of scripture in our final case study.

5 Daniel Chapter 9: The Seventy Weeks

The second earliest Christian Arabic version of Daniel, Arab^{Heb}1, is represented by one manuscript alone, Sinai Ar. 2 (dated 939/40 CE). Curiously enough, this rendition is primarily based on a Hebrew *Vorlage*, but exhibits a certain influence from other *Vorlagen*.⁴⁶ As expected given its Hebrew *Vorlage*, it does not contain the historical interpretations in Daniel 7 but there is one abnormality that calls for attention: parts of the passages in Dan 9:24–27, i.e., “Daniel's seventy weeks of years,” are rendered twice, in two Arabic versions which vary only slightly in content, suggesting that the reception of this passage was particularly important.⁴⁷ Indeed, this passage was prized by Christian commentators in late antiquity because it seemed to contain detailed predictions of the coming of the messiah. In the more elaborative Arab^{Syr}2, represented in this study by the Berlin manuscript (fol. 251b), the Christian interpretation is

45 For a more exhaustive account, see M. L. Hjälms, “The Christian Arabic Book of Daniel: Extant Versions, Canonical Constellations, and Relation to the Liturgical Practice, with an Appendix of “The Song of the Three Young Men,” *CCO* 12 (2015): 115–78.

46 Hjälms, *Christian Arabic Versions*, 92–103. Note that in Dan 9:26, Sinai Ar. 2 reads “king” instead of “prince,” which points to a dependence on the Peshitta, although the sensitive character of the passage and the fact that it has been revised, makes this passage difficult to assess. In Dan 9:25, there are a few deviations between the Masoretic text, the Peshitta, and Theodotion. In all these cases, Sinai Ar. 2 follows the Hebrew as expected.

47 Fols. 260b–261a; cf. Hjälms, *Christian Arabic Versions*, 101–103. In MS London, BL, Or. 1314 fols. 222b–223a, the last verse is repeated with slightly different words.

advocated by subtle, interpretative additions. For instance, the narrative in Dan 9:24 in the original text is propelled by a range of infinitives. In the Arabic text, the introduction of the verb *yaṣ̣īr* (“to become”) causes the last infinitive *m-s-h* (“to anoint”) to be rendered as the noun “anointed,” i.e., “the Messiah” (cf. Syr.).⁴⁸ Thus, “to anoint the holy of holies” is transformed into “and the holy of holies becomes *the Messiah*,” i.e., the messiah becomes/replaces the temple. In Dan 9:27 the original text “he shall cause the sacrifice and the offering to cease” is explicated and rendered “and the sacrifices *of the Jews* and *their* offerings will cease.”⁴⁹

Patristic interpreters shared the conviction that the passage pointed towards Jesus Christ yet they did not agree on the exact interpretation implied by the seventy weeks, which immediately became a matter of inner-Christian discussion (dates are provided according to modern historical calculation in brackets below). In his discussion of the passage, Jerome simply repeated the interpretations of previous commentaries on the passage rather than providing his own.⁵⁰ For instance, he records the interpretation of Julius Africanus (d. ca. 240 CE), for whom the seventy weeks represent four hundred and seventy-five solar years (which is the equivalent of four hundred and ninety Hebrew lunar years), beginning with the twentieth year of Artaxerxes, King of the Persians (r. 464–423 BCE) when the petition regarding the restoration of Jerusalem was issued (cf. Nehemiah 2) and ending with the time of Jesus Christ.⁵¹ According to Jerome, Eusebius (d. ca. 340 CE) gives two alternative interpretations of the seventy weeks. In the first, four hundred and eighty-three years (i.e., seven + sixty-two weeks) elapse between the first year of Cyrus the Persian (ca. 560 BCE) and the end of the reign of a king named as Alexander (probably Alexander Jannaeus, d. 76 BCE). The first seven weeks represent the time it took to build the temple (cf. John 2:20). According to the second interpretation, the period begins in the sixth year of Darius, which is the same year as the temple was completed (i.e., 516 BCE), and the seven plus the sixty-two weeks, (together four hundred and eighty-three years) ends the year in which

48 This interpretation is offered in the Peshitta, which renders the passive participle *mšīhā* here rather than a verbal noun. The Syriac text is also behind the constant reference to “anointed” as “the anointed,” since in Syriac the distinction between the definite and indefinite state is not clearly upheld.

49 In a marginal note for Dan 9:25, where we read “the going forth of *the word* to restore and to build Jerusalem,” an alternative for the Arabic word *kalām*, “word, speech,” is provided: *kalima*, “word.” This is also a common translation of λόγος, i.e., the Christ, who is specifically referred to in the comment following the gloss. Thus, it is Christ who restores and builds (the heavenly?) Jerusalem.

50 St. Jerome, *Commentary on Daniel*, 95.

51 St. Jerome, *Commentary on Daniel*, 95–98.

Herod killed the high priest Hyrcanus, which Eusebius reckons as the end of the Maccabean line. In this interpretation, Christ who was thought to have replaced the Maccabean line both as king and high priest is crucified in the middle of the last week.⁵² Jerome notes that this last week is sometimes extended to seventy years as a way of including events subsequent to the passion of Christ yet he himself is skeptical about this expansion and is, in general, cautious with interpretations that move the fulfillment of the prophecy beyond the time of Christ.⁵³

In relation to the Jews, the essential question related to whether Jesus Christ was the messiah. Theodoret of Cyrus (d. ca. 457 CE) accused the Jews of placing Daniel among the historical books to avoid the subject all together.⁵⁴ The East Syriac exegete Isho'dad of Merv (fl. ca. 850 CE) brings up a similar subject.⁵⁵ Yet in his commentary on Dan 9:24–27, Saadiah discusses the chronology at length and enters into polemical dispute with Christians. According to Saadiah, the first seven weeks represent forty-nine years, commencing with the destruction of the First Temple (i.e., 587 BCE) and ending when Cyrus gave the Jews permission to return (i.e., 539 BCE) to Jerusalem. The following sixty-two weeks equal four hundred and thirty-four years and refer to the duration of the Second Temple. The end of the sixty-two weeks marks the end of the Jewish monarchy, both the Davidic and Aaronic lines (i.e., the Maccabees), which he interprets as the meaning of the words “the anointed one was cut off.” The “leader who will come with destruction” is identified as Titus, who destroyed the temple (70 CE).⁵⁶ Pursuing a familiar polemical device of his, Saadiah indicates that Christian exegesis is deficient because it is based on a poor command of the Hebrew language, suggesting that in the clause “*The anointed will be cut off*” (Dan 9:26) [‘the anointed’] does not designate

52 St. Jerome, *Commentary on Daniel*, 98–103; cf. Eusebius, *Church History*, trans. A. C. McGiffert; *From Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*; Second Series, vol. 1, ed. by P. Schaff and H. Wace (Buffalo: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1890), revised and edited for New Advent by Kevin Knight, <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/2501.htm>, Book 1, ch. 6, §9.

53 St. Jerome, *Commentary on Daniel*, 103–104. Theodoret counted backwards from the time Jesus began his mission to the time when Nehemiah was granted permission to rebuild Jerusalem (Theodoret of Cyrus, *Commentary on Daniel*, trans. Robert C. Hill [Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006], 245–47).

54 Beatrice, “Pagans and Christians on the Book of Daniel,” 32. The prophecies in Daniel were nevertheless discussed in talmudic literature, cf. Breed, “History of Reception,” 311.

55 Cf. Ceslas van den Eynde, ed., *Commentaire d'Išo'dad de Merv sur l'Ancien Testament: V. Jérémie, Ézéchiel, Daniel*, CSCO 328, ss 146 (Leuven: Peeters, 1972), 102.

56 Saadiah Gaon, *The Book of Daniel*, 599–605. For more on Saadiah's Daniel commentary, see Eliezer Schlossberg, “The Character and Exegetical Goal of the Commentary of Rav Saadia Gaon to the Book of Daniel,” *PAAJR* 56 (1990): 5–15 (Hebrew).

one *anointed*, but *all the anointed*,” an expression common in the Hebrew language, which in this case means simply that the practice of anointing leaders will no longer be maintained.⁵⁷ Undoubtedly, this explanation was directed against the Christian interpretation of this passage which understood “the anointed will be cut off” to refer to the death of Christ, *the anointed*. Saadiah then continues:⁵⁸

And when they saw that their master was born one hundred [and] thirty five years before the destruction of the second Temple, they considered that these four hundred [and] thirty four⁵⁹ years started at the time [the vision] was told to Daniel. Therefore they added the fifty years earlier to that to the one hundred [and] thirty five years [and placed them] after the birth of their master.

On first reading, it is difficult to understand what Christian interpretation Saadiah is referring to. The timespans in the Christian interpretations we have looked at above are different from those he describes. However, his rationale becomes clearer if we surmise that he was reacting to the chronology put forward by Tertullian (d. 240 CE) in *Adversus Judaeos*. Firstly, Tertullian began calculating the “sixty two weeks plus half a week” from the moment Daniel received his vision, i.e., in the first year of Darius’s reign (539 BCE). Thus, it is this date that Saadiah is referring to when he says “they considered that these four hundred and thirty four years started at the time [the vision] was told to Daniel.” Secondly, Tertullian places the “seven weeks and half a week,”

57 Saadiah Gaon, *The Book of Daniel*, 602. See also Miriam L. Hjälm, “Universal Wisdom in Defense of the Particular: Medieval Jewish and Christian Usage of Biblical Wisdom in Arabic Bible Treatises,” in *Wisdom on the Move: Late Antique Traditions in Multicultural Conversation: Essays in Honor of Samuel Rubenson*, ed. Susan Ashbrook Harvey, Thomas Arentzen, Henrik Rydell Johnsen and Andreas Westergren, *Vigiliae Christianae Supplements* 161 (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 224–46.

58 Saadiah Gaon, *The Book of Daniel*, 603.

59 Saadiah Gaon, *The Book of Daniel*, 603. Chazan reads 490 (Robert Chazan, “Daniel 9:24–27: Exegesis and Polemics,” in *Contra Iudaeos: Ancient and Medieval Polemics between Christians and Jews*, ed. O. Limor and G. G. Stroumsa, *TSMEMJ* 10 [Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1996], 143–59, here 150). It does not matter for the overall calculation. Whether or not they assigned importance to the distinction of the seven and the sixty-two weeks, most Christian commentators start counting these weeks at a date around the reconstruction of the Second Temple, unlike Saadiah, who begins counting before that event. Several commentators place the last week of the vision after the coming of Christ and different commentators assign different length of historical time to this week. Yet few commentators interpret the entire seven week period as the historical time after the coming of the messiah.

i.e., fifty-two years (which starts with the advent of Christ and concludes with Vespasian's destruction of Jerusalem), at the *end* of the prophecy.⁶⁰ Again, it seems likely that it was this relocation of the fifty-two years to the end of the prophecy which inspired Saadiah's comment that "they added the fifty years earlier to that to the one hundred [and] thirty five years [and placed them] after the birth of their master."⁶¹ His other figure, the "one hundred and thirty five years," seems to be the product of Saadiah's own rather idiosyncratic calculation based on his belief that the Persian kingdom lasted for only thirty-four years (Yefet counts the length of the Persian kingdom as fifty-seven years).⁶² Thus, Saadiah claims that Christians added in total almost two hundred years to the chronology of Daniel in order to support their Christological doctrine. He continues: "And unsatisfied with that, they attacked us pretending that we deducted from the count two hundred years, out of prejudice against their master."⁶³

Next, Saadiah tries to establish a parallel between the Christian calculations of Daniel 9 and their chronological calculations based on the book of Genesis.⁶⁴

They did the same concerning the date of *the creation*. In fact, they learned by hearing that the messiah comes in the fifth thousands of the creation. Yet, when the[y] counted and found that their master had come in the fourth thousands [of the creation], they added one thousand years to the chronology in order that [the coming of their messiah] coincides with the fifth thousands.

60 St. Jerome, *Commentary on Daniel*, 106–107; cf. Tertullian. "An Answer to the Jews," in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers down to A.D. 325. Volume 3: Latin Christianity: Its Founder, Tertullian*, ed. A. Roberts and J. Donaldson, trans. Sydney Thelwall, rev. A. Cleveland Coxe (Eerdmans: Grand Rapids), 3:283–324, here 298.

61 Išo'dad of Merv starts counting the seventy weeks from the time the Jews begin the construction of the temple. The first seven weeks symbolize the time it took to build the temple minus three years as Christ is told that the temple took forty-six years to construct (cf. John 2:20). The sixty-two weeks represent the time elapsing from the time the temple and the city were restored until the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. From the crucifixion to the attack by the Romans and the introduction of the image into the temple by Pilate (!), one week of years plus three years elapsed. See van den Eynde, *Commentaire*, 118–21.

62 Chazan, "Daniel 9:24–27," 150; Yefet ben 'Eli, *A Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, 49. In general, Yefet's calculations match those of Saadiah's, but Yefet does not include any references to Christians (*A Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, 49–51).

63 Saadiah Gaon, *The Book of Daniel*, 603.

64 Saadiah Gaon, *The Book of Daniel*, 603.

Continuing the parallel, Saadia then notes that Christians accuse Jews of having tampered with the Hebrew version of the Bible in order to hide predictions of the Christian messiah, and that they claim to have found a copy of the Bible which adds a thousand years to the chronology between “Adam and the Flood.”⁶⁵ The Septuagint chronology of the time between the creation and the flood is indeed longer than that in the Masoretic text. Already in the third century, some Christians accused Jews of having tampered with the scriptures and Eusebius includes a detailed description of the differences between the Samaritan, Greek, and Hebrew versions of the chronology up to the flood.⁶⁶ Yet, according to Yonatan Moss, the first time chronological discrepancies in Genesis are explicitly connected to Christological considerations and Jewish-Christian polemics is in the Genesis commentary by the Syriac Orthodox polymath Jacob of Edessa (d. 708 CE).⁶⁷ This connection between chronology in Genesis and polemics in Daniel appears again in the chronography by the *Rūm* Orthodox bishop Agapius of Manbij who died the same year as Saadia (941/2 CE). Agapius explains that the “seven weeks and the sixty two weeks” are the four hundred and eighty-three years between the end of the construction of Jerusalem during the reign of the Persian king Artaxerxes Longhand and the advent/death of Christ at the time of Herod (nothing is made of the last week). But for Agapius there was more at stake in the interpretation of this chronology of Dan 9:24–27 than simply Jewish-Christian arguments about the identity of the messiah. In a way conspicuously similar to Saadia, he connects the interpretation of this passage with the correct reception of the biblical narratives. In Agapius’s text, emperor Constantine asks for the reason behind the difference between the Jewish and Christian Bibles (i.e., the Septuagint) and is led to the conclusion that Jews had altered their scriptures to hide the coming of the messiah.⁶⁸

65 Saadia Gaon, *The Book of Daniel*, 604.

66 Josef Karst, *Eusebius Werke: Die Chronik*, GCS 20 (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs’sche Buchhandlung, 1911), 34–41. See an extensive account in Yonatan Moss, “Versions and Perversions of Genesis: Jacob of Edessa, Saadia Gaon, and the Falsification of Biblical History,” in *Jews and Syriac Christians: Intersections across the First Millennium.*, ed. Aaron M. Butts and Simcha Gross (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2020), 207–29.

67 Moss, “Versions and Perversions.”

68 Alexandre Vasiliev, ed. and trans., *Kitab al-unwan. Histoire universelle écrite par Agapius (Mahboub) de Menbidj: Vol. I.1*, pO 5 (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1910), 645–60. See also a partial translation in John C. Lamoreaux, “Agapius of Manbij,” in *The Orthodox Church in the Arab World (700–1700): An Anthology of Sources*, ed. S. Noble and A. Treiger (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2014), 136–59. For a recent discussion of the Septuagint narrative in Agapius’s account, see Maria Conterno, “Found in Translation: Agapius, the

It is not so much the topic of distortion as the fact that it is argued in connection to Dan 9:24–27 which attracts attention to the similarities between Saadiah's commentary and Agapius's chronography. The differences between the chronologies in the Septuagint and the Masoretic text are not reflected in Daniel and it might seem as an unlikely step to connect an actual textual corruption in Genesis with a matter of interpretation in Daniel.⁶⁹ Nevertheless, there is a clear parallel here since already some of the earliest Christian interpreters found a relationship between the six days of creation and the six thousand years between the creation (the "first Adam") and the coming of the messiah (the "last Adam," i.e., Christ), as established in the Septuagint's chronology of Genesis.⁷⁰

Based on the interpretation of the "seventy weeks," it is clear that Saadiah did not read Agapius's text but had access to a different work.⁷¹ Furthermore, Moss has pointed out that Saadiah wrote his treatise before Agapius composed his, but most importantly, that he was puzzled over what biblical text Christians resorted to: Christians accused Jews of having tampered with the chronology yet the copy Saadiah apparently advised exhibited the same chronology as that in the Hebrew text. Had he read Agapius's commentary, he would have understood that the Christian version of the Bible he accessed was based on the Syriac Peshitta, which Agapius rejected precisely because of its chronological dissimilarity with the Septuagint. In this passage, Agapius is trying to prevent

Septuagint, and the 'Falsified' Torah of the Jews," in *Intercultural Exchange in Late Antique Historiography*, ed. M. Conterno and M. Mazzola, BB (Leuven: Peeters, forthcoming).

69 The minor textual differences between the Greek and the Hebrew versions (cf. Breed, "History of Reception," 314–15) are hardly intended here, although, in turn, they sometimes affected Christian commentaries.

70 The use of the Danielic chronology for a similar purpose can be seen as early as Hippolytus's (d. 235 CE) commentary on Daniel (Moss, "Versions and Perversions;" Treiger, "From Theodore Abū Qurra," 21–26). Origen interpreted the seventy years as the four thousand and nine hundred years which had elapsed from Adam to the end of the first century (Breed, "History of Reception," 315).

71 Moss argues that the Christian source we have discussed above originally came from a West Syriac community. In addition to the identification of Jacob's text, the argument rests on the assumption that the Western Syrians, more than any other Christian community, were characterized by their allegiance to both the Septuagint and the Peshitta. As noted above, *Rūm* Orthodox communities also used both biblical versions. In either case, as pointed out by Moss, the charge of distortion was used by other Christian communities by the tenth century ("Versions and Perversions"). Explicit preference was given to the Septuagint in several Christian communities (Treiger, "From Theodore Abū Qurra," 21–26).

Christians from using the Peshitta, which he knows is primarily based on the Hebrew text and, therefore, in his view, displays the erroneous chronology:⁷²

Now the mutilated Torah and all the books of the Prophets in Syriac copies which are in the hands of the Christians, are widespread in all the countries of the earth of the East and West, so that because of that the Christians cannot explain them and give an account of this question. All the scholars and the learned and those who wanted to translate the books of the Prophets from one language to another, or to make an exegesis of what they contained, changed nothing and commented on the Syriac text, which is in disagreement with the translation of the Seventy because the Jews mutilated it and changed it after the Resurrection of the Messiah.

It appears that the differences between various versions of the Bible were increasingly known in the long ninth century and apparently used mainly by Christians to argue that the Jews deliberately misinterpreted or altered their scriptures.⁷³ Although Jewish and Christian scholars fought one another to establish the validity of their own tradition's scriptural authenticity (at least in the example above), these discrepancies were much more problematic for Christians due to their use of multiple *Vorlagen*. In addition, Jewish and Christian leaders could hardly have been ignorant of the fact that by this time the Qurʾān was perceived by Muslims as transmitting an alternative version of the biblical narratives. Although the Qurʾān apparently relies on previous Scriptures for the credibility of its own message, the idea that Jews and Christians distorted the original version of the Bible increasingly spread among Muslims.⁷⁴ The Muslim notion of biblical distortion sprung from actual

72 Vasiliev, *Kitab al-ʿunwan*, 659–60. Vasiliev's translation is provided here and can be found online: http://www.tertullian.org/fathers/agapius_history_01_part1.htm.

73 Moss, "Versions and Perversions." See there also additional Syriac sources relating to the topic. A link between the translation of the Septuagint and Jewish denial of the Christian messiah is found also in Euty chius/Saʿid b. al-Batriq (d. 940 CE), see Abraham Wasserstein and David J. Wasserstein, *The Legend of the Septuagint: From Classical Antiquity to Today* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 141–44. Variation between the Syriac and the Greek Bibles is further discussed in the introduction to an Arabic translation of the Syrohexapla by a certain al-Ḥārith, widely assumed to have been active in the tenth century.

74 For a select few works on the topic, see Gabriel S. Reynolds, "On the Qurʾanic Accusation of Scriptural Falsification (taḥrīf) and Christian Anti-Jewish Polemic," *JAOS* 130 (2010): 189–202; and Adang, *Muslim Writers*; David Thomas, ed., *The Bible in Arab Christianity*, *CMR* 6 (Leiden: Brill, 2006).

and assumed deviations between the Qurʾān on the one hand and the Bible on the other. However, the knowledge of the textual discrepancy displayed in the Septuagint and the Hebrew Bible eventually spread to Muslim intellectuals, probably from debates similar to the one above and due to greater familiarity with the Bible among Muslims because of the increasing production of Arabic Bible translations. The Muslim scholar al-Bīrūnī (d. ca. 1048 CE) was well aware of both Jewish and Christian interpretations of Dan 9:24–27, which he dismisses. Just as in the cases above, the interpretation of this passage appears in connection to a report on the deviations between the Hebrew Bible and the Septuagint. According to al-Bīrūnī, the Hebrew Bible is “comparatively free from confusion” whereas the Septuagint is garbled to a greater extent. Al-Bīrūnī’s passage serves as a good example of how Muslims on the one hand relied on biblical narratives wherein they found Muhammad predicted, and on the other hand suspected Jews and in particular Christians for scriptural distortion.⁷⁵

6 Concluding Remarks

Based on Christian Arabic translations of Daniel, three examples have been offered of how chronological motifs in the Bible were understood and used in Near Eastern communities subsequent to the rise of Islam.

The first example centered on the identification of the four kingdoms in Daniel 7. It was demonstrated that the association of the fourth kingdom with Greece and the Antichrist with Antiochus IV, which was a minority view in patristic times, became the dominant interpretation in three out of five pre-modern Arabic versions of Daniel. The reason for this might be traced to their use of Syriac *Vorlagen*. Yet, Arabic copyists in the monasteries of Palestine and Egypt where many of these texts were produced often worked with a multitude of *Vorlagen* and different Arabic versions. Thus, we cannot exclude the possibility that they deliberately adopted the Syriac model to avoid discussing the relation between Islam and the Roman/Byzantine empire, which had previously been identified as the final kingdom. Whatever their motivation, these widely disseminated Arabic Bible translations transmitted the view that the vision was already fulfilled, an interpretation previously held largely by Syrians and, in the West, connected with Porphyry and secularism.

75 al-Bīrūnī, *The Chronology of Ancient Nations*, trans. Edward C. Sachau (London: William H. Allen, 1879), esp. 16–27.

If the first example represents an active attempt to avoid discussing the role played by the Islamic empire in sacred history or simply reflects dependence on a specific *Vorlage*, the second example demonstrates a different way of attempting to solve the problem. The incorporation of a rather late, apocalyptic narrative into the canonical composition of Daniel, was a deliberate attempt to face the reality of the Muslim presence and try to make sense of it as part of sacred history. Perhaps such texts were produced also to entertain their readers or to offer hope of redemption.⁷⁶ As both this and the previous versions circulated in the same Christian communities, it is clear that a plurality of interpretations were allowed or even valued within these communities.

The third example focused on the renditions of “the seventy weeks of years” in Daniel 9:24–27. Subtle alterations and irregularities in some Arabic renditions signaled the importance of this passage and motivated a deeper, comparative study. In the commentary by Saadiah Gaon and the chronography of his contemporary Agapius of Manbij, the interpretation of the seventy weeks not only reflected the vitality of contemporary discussions about the identity of the messiah but also raised the issue of the transmission of the biblical text. Although accusations of distortion of messianic material formed part of early Jewish-Christian polemics, the changed intellectual and social context of Jewish and Christian communities under Islam gave the debate about biblical chronology a new relevance.

Though much material remains to be explored, the examples above demonstrate how biblical texts were used in the continuous process of relating historical events to sacred history as revealed in biblical prophecy and how those interpretations could be changed according to the needs of each age. They show how sacred texts possess a relevance that transcends historical time, or perhaps rather that sacred texts are sacred when a community of believers chooses to use the language and symbolism in them to interpret their contemporary, historical reality, not only at one point in history but constantly, so that the texts become a constant in an ever changing world.

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⁷⁶ van Lent, “The Proto-Fourteenth Vision of Daniel.”

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Conflicting Traditions: The Interpretation of Daniel's Four Kingdoms in the Ethiopic Commentary (Terg^wāmē) Tradition

James R. Hamrick

1 Introduction

In Daniel we encounter the scripturalization of the four kingdoms motif. The work itself presents the division of history into four temporal kingdoms (and one eternal one) as a sacred reality, embedding the motif within inspired dreams and visions. The acceptance of Daniel as canonical by the church and synagogue has ensured that two millennia of biblical interpreters have used the motif in their framing of world history and their understanding of the future. In this contribution I examine the reception of Daniel's four kingdoms in one area typically overlooked in the study of biblical reception history: medieval Africa. The terg^wāmē, or Ge'ez (classical Ethiopic) commentaries to Daniel, continue the hermeneutical work already begun within Daniel itself by deciphering the symbols left untouched by the dream-interpreter Daniel and the interpreting angel. These commentaries do this in different ways, inheriting and developing various interpretive traditions that sometimes offer conflicting understandings of the identities of the body parts of the statue in Nebuchadnezzar's dream and the four animals in Daniel's. Within one of the commentaries these different traditions are identified, explained, allowed to coexist, and ultimately reconciled with each other. In bringing disparate traditions together the terg^wāmē provide a good window into some of the issues in the broader reception history of Daniel's four kingdoms and offer a glimpse into the Ethiopian commentary tradition.

2 Terg^wāmē

Terg^wāmē, a Ge'ez word meaning "interpretation" or "translation," refers to the extensive corpora of Ge'ez commentary materials, primarily on biblical and liturgical texts. This is to be distinguished from the *andemta*, which

are commentaries written in the Amharic language.¹ While *terg^wāmē* manuscripts are extant for the majority of Ethiopian biblical texts, they remain largely unedited and untranslated in Western scholarship. Exceptions are Garcia's edition of Ethiopian commentaries to Micah and Cowley's English translation of the *Terg^wāmē* to Revelation.² This scholarly neglect is unfortunate, as these commentaries provide us with interesting insights into the textual history and reception of biblical texts. They also preserve earlier exegetical traditions rooted in Greek and Syriac biblical interpretation. For example, one of the *terg^wāmē* to Daniel preserves extensive citations from Hippolytus of Rome's third-century CE commentary to Daniel. Some of the *terg^wāmē* are translations of Arabic sources, providing us with witnesses to Arabic Christian interpretation of scripture as it was received in an Ethiopian context.³ There are also indigenous Ethiopian commentaries, which are significant sources in understanding the reception of the Bible within an African context, something that is invaluable as Western scholarship attempts to move away from its preoccupation with Greek and Latin sources in the study of Christian history.

In addition to their value as sources for exegetical traditions, the lemma in these commentaries are also useful witnesses in the production of critical editions of Ge'ez scriptural texts and the study of their textual history in the Ethiopian tradition. For example, Löfgren and Fuhs both made use of the lemma from the commentary materials in Österreichische Nationalbibliothek,

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- 1 The primary authority for these materials is still Roger W. Cowley, *Ethiopian Biblical Interpretation: A Study in Exegetical Tradition and Hermeneutics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988). See also Keon-Sang An, *An Ethiopian Reading of the Bible: Biblical Interpretation of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2015).
 - 2 Miguel Angel Garcia, *Ethiopian Biblical Commentaries on the Prophet Micah* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1999); Roger W. Cowley, *The Traditional Interpretation of the Apocalypse of St. John in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983). See also Kirsten Stoffregen-Pedersen, *Traditional Ethiopian Exegesis of the Book of Psalms* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1995); and Weldetensae Andeberhan, *Commentari Etiopici sul Libro del Profeta Osea* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1994).
 - 3 Roger Cowley, *Ethiopian Biblical Interpretation*; "A Ge'ez Document Reporting Controversy concerning the Bible Commentaries of Ibn al-Ṭayyib," *RSE* 30 (1987): 5–13; Aaron Michael Butts, "Embellished with Gold: The Ethiopic Reception of Syriac Biblical Exegesis," *OrChr* 97 (2013/2014): 137–59. Both Cowley and Butts note especially the influence of the Arabic commentator ibn al-Ṭayyib on the Ethiopian (Ge'ez and Amharic) commentary tradition. Unfortunately, ibn al-Ṭayyib's commentary on the Bible, *The Paradise of Christianity*, remains almost entirely unedited, the exception being J. C. J. Sanders, *Commentaire sur la Genèse*, *CSCO* 274–75 (Leuven: Peeters, 1967). The editing and translation of Arabic and Ethiopic commentary materials remains a major desideratum in the growing field of biblical reception history.

Cod. aethiop. 16 (Wien 16) in their editions of Daniel, Hosea, and Micah.⁴ In my own work on the terg^wā^{mē} to Daniel, I have found several significant examples of the lemma from the commentary influencing Ge'ez Daniel manuscripts, and vice versa. As an example of the commentary lemma influencing Daniel manuscripts, see my note on Daniel 11 below, or Bibliothèque nationale de France, Éthiopien d'Abbadie 35, a Ge'ez Daniel manuscript that includes inter-linear textual additions drawn from the lemma of one of the terg^wā^{mē}. As an example of Daniel manuscripts influencing the commentary, some terg^wā^{mē} manuscripts supplement their abbreviated lemma for the Song of the Three in Daniel 3 by drawing on the mainstream Ge'ez version.

Daniel is one of the most attested works among terg^wā^{mē} manuscripts, with at least three distinct commentaries at least fragmentarily represented, and several different recensions. The most comprehensive work, which I label TDani, offers a complete Ge'ez translation and extensive commentary to the entire book of Daniel, including Bel and the Dragon and the "additions" to Daniel 3, but sans Susanna. The earliest, fullest recension of this terg^wā^{mē} (TDani^a) is attested in five manuscripts, with the earliest witness from the late-fifteenth or early-sixteenth centuries.⁵

These terg^wā^{mē} manuscripts present the text of Daniel in sections of varying length, which are then followed by commentary sections, also of varying length. The Ge'ez translation of Daniel in this recension is different from the translation of Daniel otherwise attested in the Ge'ez manuscript tradition. The

4 Oscar Löfgren, *Die äthiopische Übersetzung des Propheten Daniel* (Paris: Geuthner, 1927); Hans Ferdinand Fuhs, *Die äthiopische Übersetzung des Propheten Micha* (Bonn: Hanstein, 1968); Hans Ferdinand Fuhs, *Die äthiopische Übersetzung des Propheten Hosea* (Bonn: Hanstein, 1971).

5 The manuscripts are Gunda Gundē 84 (GG84), early-sixteenth century; Gunda Gundē 131 (GG131), late-fifteenth/early-sixteenth century; UNESCO 10.47/EMDA 392 seventeenth century; EMML 6269/EMIP 1074, early-eighteenth century; and British Library Endangered Archives Programme 336/2/3 (EAP 336/2/3), twentieth century. Images of the Gunda Gundē and EMML manuscripts are freely available through the Hill Museum & Manuscript Library's online reading room (<https://www.vhmmml.org/>). EMML 6269 is also available on microfilm at the National Archives and Library of Ethiopia in Addis Ababa. I obtained the color image set EMIP 1074 from Professor Steve Delamarter. One can order UNESCO 10.47 (scanned microfilm)/EMDA 392 (color images) from the Hill Museum & Manuscript Library. Images of EAP 336/2/3 are only available for on-site viewing on the computer terminals in the British Library reading rooms. Catalogue entries have yet to appear in print for any of these manuscripts. Ted Erho is currently cataloguing the Gunda Gundē collection, and GG84 and GG131 are recorded in the handlist published by Antonio Mordini, "Il convento di Gunde Gundiè," *RSE* 12 (1953): 48. UNESCO 10.47 is recorded in *Catalogue of Manuscripts Microfilmed by the UNESCO Mobile Microfilm Unit in Addis Ababa and Gojjam Province* (Addis Ababa: Ministry of Education and Fine Arts, Department of Fine Arts and Culture, 1970). I am grateful to Ted Erho for initially drawing my attention to many of these manuscripts.

latter, “received” version, was originally translated from a Greek (Theodotionic) *Vorlage* in the late-antique Aksumite period. The version in this *terg^wāmē* is, however, a distinct translation based ultimately on the Syriac Peshitta, although likely translated into Ge‘ez through an Arabic intermediary (Syriac > Arabic > Ge‘ez).⁶ The date, author, and origins of the *terg^wāmē* are still unknown, but it was likely translated into Ge‘ez from an Arabic source in the fourteenth century or earlier. The text of Daniel contains expansions that begin to appear in Peshitta manuscripts in the ninth and tenth centuries, providing us with a *terminus post quem* for the work as it now stands. As we will see later, the commentary incorporates much earlier traditions, citing authors such as Hippolytus of Rome, Theodoret of Cyrus, and Gregory Nazianzus.

Wien 16⁷ preserves a second version of this work (TDamb), which may actually be an independent translation of the presumed Arabic version of the commentary. Rather than the Peshitta-based version of Daniel in TDania, this recension uses the mainstream Ge‘ez Daniel translation, while integrating occasional readings from the Peshitta-based version. The *terg^wāmē* sections differ occasionally in content from TDania, but primarily differ in vocabulary and syntax. Bibliothèque nationale de France, Éthiopien d’Abbadie 157 (seventeenth century; TDanic) offers a radically abbreviated reworking of TDania.⁸

In addition to these recensions, two portions of the commentary were received in the Ethiopian liturgical and scriptural traditions. A portion of the commentary to Daniel 7 is one of several *terg^wāmē* excerpts that appear in the *Gebra Hemāmāt*, the lectionary for Passion Week.⁹ The reading from Daniel conforms to the mainstream Ge‘ez Daniel tradition, and the commentary has been lightly reworked. Part of the *terg^wāmē*’s translation of Daniel 11 has been incorporated in various ways into some Ge‘ez Daniel manuscripts as a way of correcting the clearly defective form of the chapter that appears in our earliest

6 Oscar Löfgren’s *Die äthiopische Übersetzung des Propheten Daniel* (Paris: Geuthner, 1927) is still our most current edition of Ge‘ez Daniel. Löfgren collated the lemma from the Daniel *terg^wāmē* preserved in Wien 16 (the recension 1 label TDamb), offering some short remarks on the commentary itself, including an argument based on transliterated names that the work is a translation from Arabic (xxxvii–xxxviii).

7 Nr. 1 in Nikolaus Rhodokanakis, *Die äthiopischen Handschriften der K.K. Hofbibliothek zu Wien* (Wien: Hölder, 1906), 3–15. While Rhodokanakis dates the manuscript to the sixteenth century (*Die äthiopischen Handschriften*, 15), Löfgren assigns it to the seventeenth century (*Die äthiopische Übersetzung des Propheten Daniel*, xxxvi), and Ted Erho to the late-seventeenth or eighteenth centuries (personal correspondence).

8 M. Chaîne, *Catalogue des Manuscrits Éthiopiens de la Collection Antoine D’Abbadie* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1912), 95.

9 This fragment appears in our earliest *Gebra Hemāmāt* manuscripts and continues to appear in modern printed editions of the work.

extant witnesses to the book.¹⁰ This commentary thus has a rich reception history in the Ethiopic tradition. This history begins with its translation(s) into Ge'ez, where Ethiopian scribes then reworked it in different ways. Its influence spread beyond commentary manuscripts, as excerpts found their way into important liturgical works and biblical manuscripts.

A second tergwāmē (TDan2), likely an indigenous Ethiopian composition, is preserved in varying forms in British Library, Orient. 743 (BL743; TDan2a), Gunda Gundē 112 (GG112; TDan2b), and Gunda Gundē 111 (GG111; TDan2c). A third tergwāmē fragment to Daniel 2 and 7 is also found in BL743 and EMLL 8260 (TDan3). BL743 preserves a fourth fragment with commentary to Dan 11:35 and the entirety of Daniel 12 (TDan4). A fifth tergwāmē is attested by EMLL 8971 (sixteenth century; TDan5), which does share materials in common with TDan1 but diverges enough that I classify it as a separate work. I am currently producing a critical edition and English translation of all of the Daniel tergwāmē materials as part of my doctoral dissertation at the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München, "A Critical Edition and Translation of the Ethiopic Commentaries to the Book of Daniel."

3 Continuing the Work of the Interpreting Angel

We will see that these various commentaries offer differing interpretations of the visions in Daniel 2 and 7, but they do share a basic approach. We can best understand the tergwāmē to Daniel, especially the sections dealing with dreams and visions, as a continuation of the interpretive work of Daniel and the interpreting angel. The characters in Daniel receive various dreams and visions, which they experience as something with opaque meaning and significance, something requiring interpretation and explanation. They find themselves unable to unlock these troubling and confusing phenomena and, therefore, seek the help of others. Nebuchadnezzar summons a series of specialists, while

10 This is based on an analysis of Daniel 11 in images from fifty-two Ge'ez Daniel manuscripts, most of which I accessed while the recipient of a Heckman Stipend at the Hill Museum & Manuscript Library in Collegeville, Minnesota. I have identified six major forms of this chapter, with three of these forms containing a supplement borrowed from TDania. The manuscripts with this supplement are: Bodleian Library, MS Bruce 74; Bibliothèque nationale de France Éthiopien 50; EMDA 249; UNESCO 10.4; UNESCO 10.43; EMLL 819; EMLL 6252; EMLL 8433; EMLL 9045. Löfgren noted the existence of this supplement in the first two manuscripts (his O and P respectively). However, as he was only aware of TDan1b in Wien 16, which contains a different version of Daniel, he was not able to determine that the supplement came from a Daniel tergwāmē (Löfgren, *Die äthiopische Übersetzung des Propheten Daniel*, XXXIV–XXXVI).

Daniel asks a figure within his dream-vision, a so-called interpreting angel. In all cases help is (eventually) found, and the confused recipients of dreams and visions receive an interpretation. The interpretation, however, never fully exhausts the symbolic content of the experiences. Daniel and the interpreting angel provide the characters and subsequent readers of the text with only an entryway, foothold, orientation, or key for interpreting the dreams and visions. The interpretations reveal that the dreams and visions of Daniel 2 and 7 are about world history, a series of kingdoms and kings, and their eventual end. The different elements are symbols that represent historical people, institutions, and events. The head of gold is Nebuchadnezzar. The silver breasts and arms are the kingdom that will follow Nebuchadnezzar, with the silver indicating its inferiority to Nebuchadnezzar. The four animals are four kings who will arise out of the earth. The little horn that supplants three horns is a blasphemous king who will put down three kings.

Such interpretations offer a basic orientation that leaves much unexplained. Which kingdoms and kings are these? What does it mean for the lion-like animal to have its wings torn off, or be given a human heart? Who or what is the stone cut without hands? Many elements are ignored by the interpreter within the narrative, and even those elements that are addressed retain an element of mystery. As Brennan Breed expresses it, “the dream retains a surplus of uninterpreted data and so retains a certain mysteriousness that the further interpretation will only partially dispel. The reader is responsible for deducing the meaningfulness of these details.”¹¹

The interpretive burden laid on readers was not always an easy one. The earliest interpreters of Daniel’s dreams and visions already differed from each other in their attempts to decipher this “uninterpreted data.” An ongoing increase in historical and cultural distance and new religious and political developments resulted in a further stretching of the already *zehrdehnte Kommunikationssituation*, intensifying the interpretive burden. This burden, however, was also an opportunity. By refusing to include exhaustive interpretations of visionary experiences in the text of Daniel itself, the Danielic scribes helped ensure the work’s enduring quality, as the “surplus of uninterpreted data” could accommodate new theological, political, and historical developments. Daniel and the interpreting angel left room in the dreams and visions for christs and antichrists, Romans and Arabs.

Textual commentaries attempt to ease this interpretive burden and exploit this interpretive opportunity. They step into the partially undeciphered

11 Carol A. Newsom with Brennan W. Breed, *Daniel: A Commentary*, OTL (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2014), 237.

symbolic world of Danielic dreams and visions, and continue the interpretive work that Daniel and the interpreting angel had left undone. In doing this work the tergwāmē take their lead from the interpretations already offered in Daniel. We can illustrate this with a sample from TDanza:

ወመጽአ ፡ ካልእ ፡ አርዌ ፡ ወይመስል ፡ ድበ ፡ ወቆመ ፡ ዘይቤ ፡ ዳርዮስ ፡ ውእቱ ፡
 ዘእምዘርአ ፡ ያፌት ፡ ዘጽኑዕ ፡ መንግሥቱ ፡ ዘጽኑዕ ፡ ከመ ፡ ድብ ፡ ወቁመቱ ፡ ፩ ፡ ገጽ ፡
 ዘይቤ ፡ እስመ ፡ ባሕቲቱ ፡ ነግሠ ፡ እምዘርአ ፡ ግዳይ ፡ ወኢተንሥእ ፡ ካልእ ፡ እምድጎሬሁ
 ፡ እምቤተ ፡ አቡሁ ፡ ወ፫ገበዋቲሁ ፡ ውስተ ፡ አፉሁ ፡ ዘይቤ ፡ ፫ ፡ ነገሥት ፡ እለ ፡ ሜመ¹²
 ፡ ላዕለ ፡ ፻፳በሐውርት ፡ ወ፩እምኔሆሙ ፡ ዳንኤል ፡ ወከመዝ ፡ እቤላ ፡ ብልዒ ፡ ሥጋ ፡
 ብዙጎ ፡ ዘይቤ ፡ እስመ ፡ ብዙጎ ፡ በሐውርተ ፡ ኩነነ ፡ ወኮነ ፡ መዋዕሊሁ ፡ ዓመት¹³ ፡
 ወቀተሎ ፡ እስክንድር ፡ መቅዶናዊ ፡ (BL743 f.107v)

And a second animal came, and it resembled a bear. And it stood. Darius, who was from the seed of Japheth, whose kingdom was strong like a bear is strong. *And its position was on one side.* He alone reigned from the seed of Madai. Another from the house of his father did not arise after him. *And its three rib bones were in its mouth.* Three kings whom he appointed over 120 regions, and one of them was Daniel. *And likewise I told it, "eat much flesh."* He ruled many regions. And his time was [] years.¹⁴ And Alexander the Macedonian killed him.

According to the interpreting figure in the Masoretic, Peshitta, and Ge'ez versions of Daniel 7:17, each of the four animals represents a king who will arise. This tergwāmē identifies the king represented by the bear-like figure: it is Darius the Mede, who is introduced as the successor to Belshazzar in Dan 6:1. His genealogy is keyed to the table of nations in Genesis 10, with the commentator identifying him as a descendant of Japheth's son Madai (Gen 10:2). Daniel does not tell us what it means that the second animal looks like a bear, the significance of it standing on one side while holding three ribs in its mouth, or it being commanded to rise and eat much flesh. Each of these elements is tersely deciphered by the commentator: standing on one side indicates that Darius was the only Median to reign. The three ribs are the three officials (here "kings", ነገሥት) whom Darius appoints over the one-hundred and twenty satraps (here

12 BL 743: አላ ፡ ሲግ.

13 GG 112 reads ጎዳጠ.

14 Ethiopian scribes sometimes left numeral spaces blank, so that a rubricator could fill them in later. In some cases the rubricator never managed to fill in the blank, leaving the number of years uncertain.

“regions”, በሐውርት) in Dan 6:3. The eating of much flesh refers to Darius reigning over many regions. A historical note about the length of his reign and his death at the hands of Alexander the Macedonian, which confuses Darius the Mede with Darius III, concludes the interpretation. We see in this illustrative example that the *terg^wāmē* to Daniel attempt to decipher the uninterpreted symbols in Daniel’s dreams and visions in continuity with the kinds of interpretations already present within the text itself. They draw on information from biblical texts and other historical traditions to help with this task.

Not only is the mode of interpretation inspired by the interpretive activity in Daniel, but the very format of the *terg^wāmē* is patterned after it. Michael Fishbane summarizes the format of the interpretation of dreams and visions in the Hebrew Bible as follows:

A remarkably consistent and common set of structural and terminological components are found with the interpretation of dreams, visions, and (visualized) omens. Most salient is the recurrent citation and atomization of the mantological content in the course of its decoding explication. There is thus, characteristically, first a presentation of the entire content, and then a selected repetition of its lemmata with interpretation.¹⁵

An example from Daniel is the interpreting angel in Daniel 8, who briefly reiterates the different elements that Daniel saw in the vision, followed by their meaning: “As for the ram that you saw with the two horns, these are the kings of Media and Persia. The male goat is the king of Greece, and the great horn between its eyes is the first king” (8:20–21; NRSV). The *terg^wāmē*, like other examples of Jewish and Christian scriptural commentaries, follow this format in their reiteration of short lines from the text of Daniel, followed by decipherment of their meaning.

There is a hint that the commentator behind TDani consciously understood and authorized their work as a continuation of the scripture’s internal interpretive activity. In the commentary to Daniel 7:16–18, where Daniel approaches a figure in his vision and receives an interpretation, we read:

ወዘንተ ፡ ትርጓሜ ፡ ዘተርጎሙ ፡ መልእክ ፡ ለዳንኤል ፡ ውእቱ ፡ በከመ ፡ ተርጎምነ ፡
ንሕነ ፡ ቀዳሚ ፡ ወኢበከመ ፡ ትርጓሜ ፡ አንቆሊሎስ ፡ (T7.2uu; f.48v).¹⁶

15 Michael Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1985), 447.

16 The text and versification offered throughout for TDania are taken from my in-progress critical edition. As the edition is currently unpublished, I also indicate the folio where each text can be found in EML 6269, which is currently available online from the Hill

This interpretation, which the angel gave to Daniel, is just like our interpretation earlier, and not like the interpretation of Hippolytus.

The commentator understands their work, both in form and content, to be in continuity with the work of the interpreting angel in Daniel.

4 The Fourth Kingdom Is the Greeks

We move on now to look at some of the specific ways that the four kingdoms/kings of Daniel 2 and 7 are handled by the terg^wāmē, beginning with the interpretation offered by the commentator of TDan₁, who offers the sequence (1) the kingdom of Babylon, (2) the kingdom of the Medians, (3) the kingdom of Persia, (4) the kingdom of the Greeks.¹⁷ This sequence, associated with the Syriac tradition, is also adopted by modern critical scholars.¹⁸ I mentioned that the text of Daniel in this terg^wāmē is ultimately based on the Peshitta to Daniel. Already in early sixth and seventh-century CE Peshitta Daniel manuscripts there are historical rubrics in chapter seven that identify some or all of the four animals with specific kingdoms, and which identify the little horn with Antiochus (Epiphanes added in some MSS).¹⁹ While Ambrosian Codex, 7a1 has no rubric for the first animal, the sequence of kingdoms given in the manuscripts is otherwise the kingdom of the Babylonians, the kingdom of the Medians, the kingdom of the Persians, and the kingdom of the Greeks.²⁰ Some Arabic Daniel manuscripts also include these references.²¹ The text of Daniel in this terg^wāmē contains these historical identifications, although they are no

Museum & Manuscript Library at <http://www.vhmdl.org>. Images of GG84 and GG131 are also available on this website.

- 17 For a discussion of some historical opinions on the identity of the four kingdoms, see H. H. Rowley, *Darius the Mede and the Four World Empires in the Book of Daniel: A Historical Study of Contemporary Theories* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1964).
- 18 Wido van Peursen, "Daniel's Four Kingdoms in the Syriac Tradition," in *Tradition and Innovation in Biblical Interpretation: Studies Presented to Professor Eep Talstra on the Occasion of his Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, eds. W. Th. van Peursen and J. W. Dyk (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 189–207; Arie van der Kooij, "The Four Kingdoms in Peshitta Daniel 7 in the Light of the Early History of Interpretation," in *The Peshitta: Its Use in Literature and Liturgy*, ed. Bas Ter Haar Romeny (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 123–129.
- 19 Konrad D. Jenner, "Syriac Daniel" in *The Book of Daniel: Composition and Reception*, eds. John J. Collins and Peter W. Flint, VTSup 83, FIOTL 2; (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 2:633–634.
- 20 ܩܒܠܐ ܐܫܘܪܝܐ, ܩܒܠܐ ܩܘܡܢܝܐ, ܩܒܠܐ ܦܪܫܝܐ, ܩܒܠܐ ܩܪܝܝܐ
- 21 Such as the ninth-century CE MS Sinai Arabic 1 and the tenth-century MS Sinai Arabic 513. See Miriam Lindgren Hjälml, *Christian Arabic Versions of Daniel: A Comparative Study of Early MSS and Translation Techniques in MSS Sinai Ar. 1 and 2* (Leiden: Brill, 2016).

longer marked as paratextual elements as they are in Syriac and Arabic witnesses. These references read:

- 7:4 — **ወይእቲ : መንግሥተ : ባቢሎን** (“and that is the kingdom of Babylon”)
 7:5 — **ወይእቲ : መንግሥተ : ሰብኦ : ግሁ** (“and that is the kingdom of the people of Media”)
 7:6 — **ወይእቲ : መንግሥተ : ፉርስ** (“and that is the kingdom of Persia”)
 7:7 — **ወይእቲ : መንግሥተ : የናናውያን** : (“and that is the kingdom of the Greeks”)

The identification of the little horn as Antiochus also appears:

- 7:20 — **ውእቲ : ኦንጥያኮስ** (“that is Antiochus”)

The commentary to Daniel 7 reiterates this sequence, giving explanations for the various details of the animals.²² The first animal is Babylon, which, in an allusion to Daniel 2, is the “head” of the kingdoms. It was strong and all people feared it, just like a lion. Its wings like an eagle’s symbolize its exaltation and the strength of its command, and that it quickly encircled all the edges of the earth. The plucking off of its wings refers to its destruction and the scattering of its armies, and it standing up indicates the loss of the kingdom and it becoming like all people. Receiving a human heart means that it loses its strong heart and becomes afraid and weak like a feeble human, and is trampled by the poor. The commentary also offers a second interpretation of the humanization of the first animal, suggesting that it refers to what happened to Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel 4 when he dwelt with wild animals.

The second animal, which looks like a bear, is the kingdom of the people of Media. The bear symbolizes this kingdom because it was not as great as Babylon, which preceded it, or Persia, which followed it. It was inferior to these other kingdoms, just as a bear’s strength is inferior to a lion, and as it has a timid and weak nature. The bear-like animal stands on one side because Media ruled in one region of this world. The three rib bones in its teeth indicate that it reigned over three kingdoms: Babylon, Media, and Persia. The command to rise and eat much flesh refers to its plunder and consumption of the wealth of the three kingdoms.

The third animal, which looked like a leopard, is the kingdom of Persia, because it was stronger than the Median kingdom, just as the leopard is stronger

²² The interpretation of the four animals is found in T7.1 (ff.41v–44v). My description of the interpretations is a general paraphrase of the text itself.

than the bear. The four wings and four heads indicate the expansion of the kingdom and it quickly encircling the entire earth, with it reigning over the four edges of the earth. The animal receiving authority refers to what Isaiah spoke about in his prophecies about Cyrus (Isa 44:28; 45:1).

The fourth animal is the kingdom of Alexander, king of the Greeks, who was exalted above all kingdoms. Its great teeth are its armies, which crush all peoples, plunder their wealth, trample their fields, and reap their fruit and their wine. Its appearance was not like the appearance of the other three animals, but was much more beautiful than them, with the kingdom of Alexander surpassing the kingdoms that were before it in its achievements and in its methods. The things that Alexander did were exceedingly great, and he captured the nations in a short time. The commentator then extols Alexander, who, although his kingdom lasted only twelve years, left an eternal memory through his deeds and his building of cities and fortresses, including the legendary Gates of Alexander.²³

The ten horns are the ten kings who were appointed over the kingdom of the Greeks. The little horn is Antiochus Epiphanes. The three horns he removes are Seleucus, Ptolemy, and the king of Babylon. He is called the little horn because he was inferior to the others, but then his kingdom became greater than the others. The horn's human-like eye is his cunning, which he used to overcome many and destroy them along with their cities. The mouth that speaks boastfully refers to his conflict with the "learned ones" (ማእምራን), the name the commentary gives to the Maccabees and the faithful Jews in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes.

The commentary to Nebuchadnezzar's dream in Daniel 2 contains this same sequence of kingdoms, but with less elaboration.²⁴ The head of gold is the kingdom of Babylon, because its glory was above all the kingdoms. The breast and arms of silver are the kingdom of Media. The belly and hips of bronze are Persia, which shimmered just as pure bronze shimmers. The iron legs, the fourth kingdom, is the kingdom of Alexander the Macedonian, who was strong like iron. The feet that contain clay and iron represent the division of Alexander's kingdom among his four servants at his death, with the iron specifically symbolizing the strong successors of Alexander and the clay symbolizing the weak ones. The descendants of Alexander's successors warred

23 እስመ : ሐነጸ : አህጉራተ : ዐበይተ : ወማኅረዳተ : ነዋኅተ : በከመ : ማኅረደ : ብርት : ዘገብረ : ላዕለ : ጉግ : ወማጉግ : ወካልአተ : ዘይመስሎ : ለውአቱ : ("For he built great cities and tall fortresses, like the fortress of brass that he made against Gog and Magog, and the others that resembled it" [T7.1cc; f.44r]).

24 T2.5–6, ff.6v–8r.

with each other and against the Hebrews. They intermarried with each other not in the name of peace, but in deceit. The commentator offers some examples of these conflicts, including Ptolemy marrying his daughter to Alexander the Elder, the son of Antiochus Epiphanes, then taking her and marrying her to Demetrius and killing Alexander.

We see from this brief and selective summary that this *tergʷāmē* inherited a biblical text that contained paratexts that presented a four-kingdom sequence of Babylon, Media, Persia, and Greece. The commentary sections adopt this scheme, with Greece divided into the two stages of Alexander's reign and the reign of his successors. The commentary seeks to fill in this picture by deciphering the surplus symbols in the dream-visions, and by incorporating traditions about Alexander the Great, his successors, and the persecution under Antiochus Epiphanes, which it draws from 1–2 Maccabees (named sources) and possibly from the Alexander Romance. The commentary portrays Alexander and his kingdom very positively, but Media and Alexander's successors negatively. It offers interpretations that are akin to the interpretations one encounters in historical-critical commentaries today, representing an interpretive tradition that has endured through the ancient, medieval, and modern periods of biblical interpretation.

5 The Fourth Kingdom Is the Romans

TDam¹ also includes an alternate interpretation that reflects a widely-attested sequence in the history of interpretation: (1) Babylon, (2) Media and Persia together, (3) Greece, and (4) Rome. In the commentary to Daniel 2:41–43 the commentator introduces a source that will be cited throughout the *tergʷāmē*:

ናሁ ፡ ከሠትነ ፡ ለክሙ ፡ ትርጓሜ ፡ መለያልይሁ ፡ ለጣዖት ፡ ዘርእዮ ፡ ናቡክድናጾር ።
ወይእዜኒ ፡ ንክሥት ፡ ለክሙ ፡ ትርጓሜ ፡ ካልአ ፡ ዘረከብናሁ ፡ እምቃለ ፡ ፩ብእሲ ፡
ጠቢብ ፡ ዘስሙ ፡ አንቆሊጦስ ፡ ሊቀ ፡ ጳጳሳት ፡ ዘሀገረ ፡ ሮሜ ፡ ዘኮነ ፡ ሰማዕተ ።
(T2.6m; f.7v)

Behold we revealed to you the interpretation of the body parts of the idol that Nebuchadnezzar saw. And now we will reveal to you another interpretation, which we found, from the word of one wise man whose name was Hippolytus, the bishop of the city of Rome, who died a martyr.

This is a reference to Hippolytus of Rome's commentary to Daniel, which is the earliest fully extant Christian commentary to scripture. Written in Greek

in 204 CE, it is extant in Greek and Old Church Slavonic, with fragments in Syriac and Armenian.²⁵ In this terg^wā^{mē} we now have the first Ge'ez fragments of the work known to Western scholarship.²⁶ After this introductory comment the terg^wā^{mē} offers Hippolytus's interpretation of the statue: Babylon is the head of gold; Persia and Media are combined as the second kingdom of silver; the third, bronze kingdom is the Greeks; and the iron legs are the Romans. The commentary then attributes to Hippolytus an interpretation of the toes as the Arabs, a point to which I will return below.

Hippolytus is also extensively referenced in the commentary to Daniel 7. It is noted there that Hippolytus combines the kingdoms of Media and Persia into the bear-like image, identifies the leopard-like animal as the kingdom of the Greeks, the fourth animal as Rome, and the little horn as the Antichrist. The commentator also includes some of Hippolytus's interpretation of the symbolic significance of the animals, for example that the leopard symbolizes extreme wisdom and intelligence, but also violence.

Just as the Greek interpretation appeared in the lemma through the historical expansions explicitly identifying the four kingdoms, evidence for a Roman interpretation may also appear in the lemma. In Dan 7:26, which depicts the judgment of the small horn, there is a short expansion that says "the Lord extinguished with the spirit of his mouth" (ወአጥፍአ : እግዚአብሔር : በሞንፈሰ : አፋሁ). This likely draws on the description of Christ destroying the lawless one in 2 Thess 2:8, which was interpreted by the church as a reference to the Antichrist. This expansion is not found in the Hebrew, Greek, Syriac (at least those MSS collated by the Leiden edition), or Ge'ez witnesses, meaning it may be an expansion within the Arabic version of Daniel that was used by the commentator. What is interesting here is the potential tension between this reference to 2 Thess 2:8, the expansion in Dan 7:20 that identified the little horn as Antiochus, and the commentary proper. The reference to 2 Thessalonians would connect this scene of judgment with the judgment of the Antichrist, rather than the judgment of Antiochus Epiphanes, and would fit well with a Roman interpretation of the fourth kingdom. Thus the text of Daniel in the terg^wā^{mē} preserves expansions that exhibit *both* the historicizing and future interpretations of Daniel 7.

25 Hippolytus, *Hippolyt Werke: Erster Band, Erster Teil: Kommentar zu Daniel*, ed. Georg Nathanael Bonwetsch and Marcel Richard, GCS 7 (Berlin: Akademie, 2000). There is an English translation in Thomas C. Schmidt and Nick Nicholas, *Hippolytus of Rome: Commentary on Daniel and 'Chronicon'* (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2017), and a new German translation in Katharina Bracht, *Danielkommentar* (Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 2016).

26 Hippolytus' treatise on the Antichrist is also extant in Ge'ez. André Caquot, "Une version ge'ez du traité d'Hippolyte de Rome sur l'Antichrist," *AnE* 6 (1965): 165–214.

The sequence with Rome as the final kingdom also appears in the three extant *terg^wāmē* to Daniel, what I am labeling TDan₂ and TDan₃ and TDan₅.²⁷ For TDan₂, which is attested (sometimes in dramatically different forms) in BL743 (ff.103v–119v), GG111 (ff.23r–26v), and GG112 (ff.93r–96v), the statue from Daniel 2 in its entirety represents the kingdom of Babylon. The head of gold is the kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar. The breast, *hands*, and arms of silver are the kingdom of Darius. The belly and hips of bronze are the kingdom of Alexander. And the legs and feet of iron and clay are the kingdom of Rome, a kingdom in which “a son did not rule on the throne of his father.”

The same sequence appears in the commentary’s treatment of Daniel 7. The first animal is Nebuchadnezzar, and the various elements are all understood to symbolize the episode of his exile and return recorded in Daniel 4. The animal looks like a lion because Nebuchadnezzar became like a lion. It has wings like an eagle because he resembled a bird. The wings are plucked off the animal, it stands on its feet, and it is given a human heart, all of which refer to Nebuchadnezzar’s restoration. BL743 and GG112 emphasize his return to his kingdom, while GG111 emphasizes his proclamation of faith. The length of his kingdom (GG112 adds his son to the count as well) was sixty-seven years, and he came from the seed of Ham. This interest in indicating the length of the various kingdoms appears as well in Hippolytus’s commentary.²⁸

I already quoted this *terg^wāmē*’s interpretation of the bear-like animal above. GG111 does offer a different interpretation here, identifying the three bones as the kingdom of Babylon, which had three parts: Persia, the Chaldeans, and Media.

The animal like a leopard is Alexander, who was from the seed of Javan (𐩧𐩬𐩪, Gen 10:2), brother of Madai, who was great. The leopard-like animal has four wings in most versions of Dan 7:6, but there is a variant in some Ge’ez manuscripts that claims five wings (but still only four heads). BL743 reads here four wings and interprets them as the four 𐩰𐩁𐩪𐩪 (probably “jurisdictions”). GG112 reads five wings, but interprets them also as four 𐩰𐩁𐩪𐩪. The four heads are the four princes who were under Alexander, whom he left at the time he killed Darius. The authority given to the animal refers to Alexander eradicating worshippers of an idol, and according to BL743 “they” (the idol worshippers?) then worshipped God. This interesting portrayal of Alexander appears again in this manuscript’s commentary to Daniel 8, where Alexander is both the goat and the horn that becomes great, throwing down and trampling the heavenly

27 TDan₅ offers a special case, and not will be discussed here.

28 Hippolytus notes, for instance, that the Persians reigned 230 years (IV.3.4) or 245 years (IV.3.5).

host and stars. Noting that Alexander was the only one of the Greek kings to worship the Lord, the commentary interprets this trampling of hosts and stars as Alexander capturing and eradicating demons, vipers, and idolaters. The scribe behind GG112 may not have been as keen about this faithful portrayal of Alexander, and, therefore, omits any reference to Alexander eradicating idolaters in Daniel 7, and says nothing about Alexander worshipping the Lord. Instead, Alexander was merely pleasing to the Lord.

Alexander rested on the twenty-first or twenty-fourth of the month of Gənbot (ninth month, May–June), and his kingdom lasted twelve years.²⁹ There were seventeen kings of the Greeks after Alexander, and the duration of their kingdom was two-hundred and ninety-nine years.³⁰

GG111 departs from the other witnesses in its treatment of the third animal. Rather than Alexander, this leopard-like animal is Necho, king of Egypt. It has five wings, which are the five cities of Egypt.³¹ The authority given to it refers to him capturing Israel and killing Jehoiachin. Here we have a fascinating example of the commentary reflecting a peculiar reading in the Ge'ez version of Daniel, which as I have already mentioned speaks of five wings rather than four.

The fourth animal is the kingdom of Rome, which is from the seed of Esau, and which is stronger than all the kings of the earth.³² The ten horns are the ten kings who reigned in Rome.³³ The little horn is Antiochus, who defiled Jerusalem and “his” (God’s?) holy ones. The three horns that were plucked off are the three kings who reigned in one year, whom the commentator says Ezra mentions. This is a reference to the year of four emperors and an allusion to 4 Ezra 12:22–28. GG111 departs in its treatment of the fourth animal. It also identifies it as the kingdom of Rome, quoting Luke 2:1 (the census under Augustus Caesar) as support. But it then identifies the horns, listing figures such as Herod, king of Galilee, Philip his brother, and Pilate, judge of Jerusalem. The little horn is the Antichrist and the horns he replaces are Pope Leo, Macedonius, and Arius, three heretics from a miaphysite perspective.

TDan3³⁴ deals only with the interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream from Daniel 2 and Daniel’s dream-vision from Daniel 7. The exposition begins with a full quotation of Dan 2:38–45 in a form that deviates little from the mainstream

29 GG112 reads twenty-nine years.

30 GG112 reads sixteen kings. BL743 reads three-hundred and sixty-nine years.

31 Perhaps a reference to Isa 19:18. TDan5 also maintains the Ethiopic reading of five wings, interpreting them as the cities of Babylon, Persia, Media, Syria, and Greece (EMML 8971 f.57v).

32 GG112 reads “kingdoms” instead of “kings.”

33 GG112 reads “until the birth of Christ.”

34 BL743 ff.167r–169v; EMML 8260 ff.73v–79r.

Ge'ez Daniel tradition. An interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream follows. After identifying the various referents of the dream, the commentary turns to Daniel 7, quoting 7:2–8 and then launching into an interpretation of the four animals.³⁵ In its interpretation of Daniel 2, the commentary proceeds swiftly through the different portions of the statue. The head of gold represents both Nebuchadnezzar, as Daniel himself says, and the entire kingdom of Babylon, which was more exalted than all kingdoms. The shoulders and arms of silver are the kingdom(s) of Persia and Media.³⁶ There is some ambiguity here over whether Persia and Media are considered a single kingdom or two. The singular noun for kingdom is used, but the verb is plural. Persia and Media are considered “less than gold.” The belly and hips of bronze (or copper) are the kings of the Greeks, who “took the kingdom of Persia and Media.” The commentator notes that Alexander killed Darius, a historical detail that appears frequently in *terg'wāmē* to Daniel. No distinction is made between the legs and feet of the statue, with the commentator referring to the legs as consisting of iron and clay. This is the kingdom of Rome, which was “exceedingly strong.” The clay represents the people whom the Romans ruled with their strength. The iron is the “house of the kingdom” (ቤተ : መንግሥት).

The interpretation of Daniel 7 is likewise brief. The sea from which the four animals arise is the world. The first beast, which is like a lion, is the kingdom of Babylon. Its wings, which are like those of an eagle, represents Nebuchadnezzar elevating and magnifying himself above the God of heaven. The tearing off of the wings represents “the exile of his kingdom” and his grazing with baboons (ሐላስትዮ) for seven years, a reference to Daniel 4. Likewise, the gift of a human heart to the animal is Nebuchadnezzar's return and his blessing of the Lord. At this point the commentator quotes a modified version of 4 Ezra 12:15. The commentary reads:

ወዕዘራኒ : ይቤ : በእንቲአሁ : ወይነግሥ : ዳግመ : ውእቱ : ይጸንዕ : እምከሎሙ :
እለ : ቅድሜሁ : (EMML 8260 f.78r; BL743, ff. 168v–169r)³⁷

And Ezra also says concerning him, “And he will reign again. He will be stronger than all those before him.”

35 BL743 omits Dan 7:3–8.

36 መንከፍት here instead of the እንግድዳ found in Ge'ez Daniel and the lemma to TDamaia.

37 The quotation in Dillmann's edition of 4 Ezra is: ወይነግሥ : ዳግመ : ውእቱ : ዘይጸንዕ : መዋዕሊሁ : ፈድፋደ : እምነ : ፲ወ፪ ። (“And one will reign again whose days will be exceedingly stronger than the twelve”). August Dillmann, *Veteris Testamenti Aethiopicum Tomus Quintus, quo continentur Libri Apocryphi, Baruch, Epistola Jeremiae, Tobith, Judith, Ecclesiasticus, Sapientia, Esdrae Apocalypsis, Esdrae Graecus* (Berlin, 1894).

The commentator seems to be interpreting this as a reference to the second part of Nebuchadnezzar's reign.

The animal who looks like a bear is the kingdom of Persia, for "the people of Persia reigned after Babylon." The rib bones in the bear's mouth represent the peoples of Babylon, Persia, and Media. The third animal, the leopard, refers to the Greeks and Alexander, who took Darius's kingdom from him. The commentator points us to the goat and the ram from Daniel 8, noting that the goat represents Alexander and the ram, Darius *the Mede*. The commentator refers to the animal's five wings (reflecting the reading in many Ge'ez Daniel manuscripts) and four heads, identifying the four heads as representing Alexander's deathbed division of his kingdom into four parts. The fourth animal is the kingdom of Rome, with the horns representing a succession of kings. The horn that grew in their midst is the Antichrist. The emphasis on the horns being a sequence of kings rather than simultaneous rulers is interesting, and echoes the sequential emphasis of the wings in 4 Ezra's vision.

Both TDan₂ and TDan₃ thus agree with the Hippolytan sequence presented in TDan₁, understanding the four kingdoms/kings as: (1) Babylon; (2) Media and Persia; (3) the Greeks; (4) Rome. The one deviation is GG111, which interprets the leopard-like animal as Necho, king of Egypt. It is noteworthy that TDan₂ interprets the little horn as Antiochus, which is an example of the Greek interpretation interfering in a Roman interpretation of the fourth animal. This may also reflect confusion inspired by the tradition we find in Hippolytus's commentary of reading the little horn in Daniel 7 as the Antichrist, but the horn in Daniel 8 as Antiochus.

6 The Arabs Are Part of the Fourth Kingdom

I mentioned earlier that TDan₁ attributes to Hippolytus the claim that the toes of the statue in Daniel 2 are the Arabs. This brings us to methods of interpreting the fourth kingdom that flourished following the rise of Islam. Just as the rise of the Roman empire gave opportunity for fresh interpretations of Daniel's visions and the four-kingdom schema, so the Arab conquests of the seventh century stimulated new theological-historiographical reflection. How were the church and synagogue to understand this transition within the larger divine plan? Already in the Umayyad period (661–750 CE) there were attempts to place the Arab conquests within existing theological-historiographical models and frameworks. The four-kingdom schema was one such model.³⁸ There

38 van Peursen, "Daniel's Four Kingdoms in the Syriac Tradition;" Harald Suermann, "The Use of Biblical Quotations in Christian Apocalyptic Writings of the Umayyad Period," in

seems to be some variety in how exactly Arabs were inducted into this schema. Some continued to see Rome as the fourth kingdom and its collapse under Arab invaders as a temporary event or a sign that the end was near, while others, such as the *Gospel of the Twelve Apostles* and the seventh-century Armenian historian Sebeos, identified the Arabs as the fourth kingdom.³⁹

The transition from legs of iron to feet of iron mixed with clay in Nebuchadnezzar's dream provided later readers with interpretive flexibility, allowing them to introduce more complexity and additional peoples or empires into the final part of the schema. The horns of the fourth beast in Daniel 7 created similar opportunity. In the primary interpretation offered by TDan1 the legs and feet are understood as two phases of the Greek kingdom: first Alexander (the iron), and then his divided, warring, and intermarrying successors with varying amounts of strength (the iron mixed with clay). The Arab interpretation presented in TDan1 actualizes this latent potential of a two-phased fourth kingdom, allowing the Arab Muslims to be incorporated into the Roman interpretation. The Arabs become the clay to Rome's iron, or the toes and the horns. We see an example of this interpretation in the tenth-century Karaite commentator Jepheth ibn Ali, who translated Daniel and wrote a commentary in Arabic:

Then he described the fourth kingdom, which he compares to iron ... This is the kingdom of Rome, before the kingdom of Arabia arose. He makes the head the first kingdom, and the breast and arms the second kingdom, and the belly and thighs the third kingdom: and he makes the upper parts of the legs the fourth kingdom before the kingdom of Arabia ... The *iron* represents the Romans, and the *clay* the Arabs; and this is because the Romans reigned a hundred years before the Arabs; then the Arabs began to reign, but the kingdom of the Romans remained, as is witnessed in our own day. He compares the kingdom of the Arabs to *clay*, because they have neither power nor force like those of the Romans.⁴⁰

The relevant references in the tergwāmē are in the treatment of Daniel 2:41–43 and of Daniel 7:19–28 in TDan1a:

The Bible in Arab Christianity, ed. David Thomas (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 69–90; Walter Emil Kaegi, "Initial Byzantine Reactions to the Arab Conquest," *CH* 38 (1969): 139–49.

39 van Peursen, "Daniel's Four Kingdoms," 202–203; Kaegi, "Initial Byzantine Reactions," 146–47.

40 Jepheth ibn Ali the Karaite, *A Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, trans. D. S. Margoliouth (Oxford: Clarendon, 1889), 12–13.

ወእምድኅረ : እሙንቱ : አጻብዐ : አእጋር : እለ : እሎንቱ : ዐረብ : ዘሀለዉ :
 ያስተርእዩ : ውስተ : ዓላም : ወዝንቱ : ነገር : ዘአንቆሊጦስ ። ወጥቀ : አመረ :
 በመንግሥቶሙ : ለዓረማዊን : ዘርአ : አጋር : ዘተወልደ : እምኔሃ : እስማዔል ።
 ወአንቆሊጦስስ : ኢከሠተ : ነገሮሙ : አላ : ካልአን : ተርገሙ ። ከመ : ልሕዥት :
 ይእቲ : መንግሥቶሙ : (T2.6r; f.8r)

And after these were the toes, which are the Arabians who would appear in the world. This is the word of Hippolytus. And he precisely indicates the kingdom of the Arameans, the offspring of Hagar, the one who was born from her, Ishmael. Hippolytus did not reveal their language, but others have interpreted that the clay is their kingdom.

ወንሕነሰ : ንቤ : ከመ : ፲አቅርንት : እሙንቱ : ፲ነገሥት : እለ : ነግሡ : እምድኅረ
 : እስክንድር : በመንግሥተ : ዮናናውያን ። ወአንቆሊጦስስ : ይተረጉም : ከመ :
 እሙንቱ : ነገሥተ : ዐረብ : እለ : ወፅኡ : እምዘርአ : ቁዳር : ወልደ : ይስማኤል
 : እለ : ያስተርእዩ : ውስተ : ዓለም : እስከ : ምጽአቱ : ለሐሳዌ : መሲሕ ።
 (T7.3h; f.10r)

And as for us, we say that the ten horns are the ten kings who reigned after Alexander in the kingdom of the Greeks. But Hippolytus comments that these are the kings of Arabia, who came from the seed of Kedar, son of Ishmael, who appear in the world until the coming of the Antichrist.

There are some questions with how we should best understand and render what is happening here, but it seems the commentator is attributing to Hippolytus the opinion that the toes of the statue are the Arabians (ዐረብ, literally “Arabia”, but used here in the sense of a people), and that the ten horns of the fourth beast are the kings of the Arabs. The commentary on Daniel 2 then clarifies who the Arabs are: they are the *Aramawin*, the descendants of Hagar. The commentary to Daniel 7 identifies them more specifically as the descendants of Ishmael’s son Kedar. The term *Aramawin* has a range of possible meanings in Ge‘ez and can mean non-Christian, heathen, infidel, gentile, Muslim, or Aramaic speaker.⁴¹ The commentator likely intends Muslims here, creating an equivalence between Arabs, the descendants of Hagar/Ishmael, and Muslims. Interestingly, this attribution is immediately followed by the comment that Hippolytus did not reveal their language, but others interpreted

41 As Getachew Haile notes, “Christian authors used the word Arāmi when referring to non-Christians, especially the Muslims and the non-Christian Oromo” (*Voices from Dābra Zāmāddo* [Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2013], 207 n. 29).

the clay as their kingdom. Although the Arabs were a known people at the time of Hippolytus, we do not find this interpretation in his commentary to Daniel 2–7, something our commentator admits here. In his discussion of Daniel 2, Hippolytus writes:

After them the Romans, who are the iron legs of the image, being strong as iron. Next the toes of the feet, so that in each place democracies might be shown, which are destined to come which are distributed amongst the ten toes of the image, in which the iron will be mixed with clay. (II.12.6–7)⁴²

In his discussion of Daniel 7 he writes:

And so we have [already] arrived [at this point and] said that it is clear that this is the fourth kingdom, from which no other greater [kingdom] or even such a kingdom [like it] has arisen on the earth, from which ten horns are about to spring forth. For it will be divided into ten kingdoms and in them another small horn shall arise, which is that of the Antichrist and he shall root out three who were before him, that is, he shall destroy the three kings of Egypt and of the Libyans and of the Ethiopians, wishing to possess for himself the whole kingdom. (IV.12.4)

For Hippolytus, writing in the early-third century CE, the toes and horns represented coming kings and kingdoms, but other than Egypt, Libya, Ethiopia, and the Antichrist, he does not label who or what they will be. Hippolytus's interpretation is general enough, however, to allow for one to place the Arab conquest among the toes and the horns. The *terg'āmē* indicates that this is the case, that Hippolytus referred to something that would follow Rome, but did not explicitly identify the toes and the horns as Arabs or Muslims, a connection that later commentaries or traditions available to the commentator made explicit.

TDanib reworks the passages in interesting ways:

ወእምድግሬሆሙ ፡ ነግሡ ፡ ሰብአ ፡ ዓረብ ፡ ዘውእቶሙ ፡ አፃብዓ ፡ አእጋር ፡ ዘኮነ ፡
ለምስል ፡ ወዝንቱ ፡ ውእቱ ፡ ሕዝብ ፡ ዘሀለዎ ፡ ያስተርእ ፡ በውስተ ፡ ዓለም ፡
ወዝንቱ ፡ ውእቱ ፡ ቃሉ ፡ ለአንቆሊጦስ ፡ ወናሁ ፡ አመረ ፡ በእንተ ፡ ሰብአ ፡

42 English translations of Hippolytus are taken from Schmidt and Nicholas, *Hippolytus of Rome: Commentary on Daniel and 'Chronicon.'*

ዓረብ : ዘውእቶሙ : ተንበላት : ወኢያግሀደ ። ወባሕቱ : ካልአንሰ : አግሀዱ :
 ወከሠቱ : እስመ : ልሕዮትሰ : ዘመኖሙ : ውእቱ : (Wien 16, f.22r)

And after them the people of Arabia reigned, who were the toes of the feet which belonged to the image. And this is a nation that will appear in the world. This is the word of Hippolytus. Behold, he indicates the people of Arabia, who are the Muslims. But he did not say this openly, but only others spoke openly and revealed that the clay is their era.

ዘይቤ : ፲ : ነገሥት : እለ : ነግሡ : እምድሳረ : እስክንድር : በመንግሥተ :
 ዮናናዊያን ። በፍካሬ : አንቆሊጦስሰ : እሊአሁ : ለሐሳዌ : መሲሕ : እለ :
 ያስተርእዩ : በዲበ : ምድር ። (Wien 16, f.48r)

Ten kings. The ones who reigned after Alexander in the kingdom of the Greeks. In the interpretation of Hippolytus, [they are] the followers of the Antichrist who will appear upon the earth.

The scribe responsible for this recension has edited the interpretation to Daniel 2 for clarity, and made some lexical and grammatical changes. The text now specifies that the Arabs/toes were a **ሕዝብ** (nation) that has appeared in the world. Rather than speaking of the *Aramawin*, it identifies the “people of Arabia” with **ተንበላት**, a clear designation for Muslims. Rather than discussing their genealogy (the descendants of Ishmael, son of Hagar), their religious identity is emphasized. Although the word Arab seems to be attributed to Hippolytus, this scribe makes it even clearer that Hippolytus himself did not clearly say this, but that others have made it clear that the clay refers to the time of the Arabs/Muslims. In the discussion of the ten horns the scribe has removed any explicit reference to the Arabs, saying that for Hippolytus the ten kings are the followers of the Antichrist who will appear on the earth.

Our commentator was aware of the widespread traditions that incorporated the Arabs into the final phase of the statue in Daniel 2 and the fourth animal in Daniel 7, and may offer evidence that some were interpreting Hippolytus in this way.

7 Collecting and Synthesizing Conflicting Traditions

The terg^wāmē to Daniel collect three major interpretive traditions of Daniel 2 and 7. The commentator from TDam¹ opts for the position that is attested primarily in Syriac circles, that the legs and feet of the statue and the fourth

animal with its ten horns refer to the kingdom of Alexander and his successors, culminating in the wickedness of Antiochus Epiphanes. Through this commentary's engagement with Hippolytus of Rome and in TDan2 and TDan3 we find the collapsing of the Medes and Persians into a single kingdom and the identification of the fourth kingdom as Rome (with one witness claiming the third beast as Pharaoh Necho). And finally, we encounter the Byzantine incorporation of the Arab conquest and Muslims into the final stages of Daniel's schema in TDan1's reception of Hippolytus.

Each of these methods of interpretation were strongly attested in the ancient and medieval worlds, and each of them continues to have advocates today. The first interpretation dominates in historical-critical scholarship, which, like our commentator, sees the struggles of Jews in the second century BCE as the culmination of the dream-visions in Daniel. The second interpretation, which emphasizes Rome, Christ, and Antichrist, may be considered a dominant reading in the history of Christian interpretation, and continues to be advocated by many modern Christians.⁴³ The third interpretation, which finds Arabs and Muslims in Daniel's visions, was widespread following the rise of Islam, and is also experiencing a contemporary revival among some Christian apocalypticists amidst rampant Islamophobia.⁴⁴ Multiple understandings of these visions have existed and co-existed for the last two millennia, and in the Ethiopian *terg^wāmē* tradition we find them co-existing not only amongst different commentary texts, but within a single commentary.

How does TDan1 handle its inheritance of conflicting interpretative traditions? Jerome's commentary to Daniel, which interacts with Porphyry's interpretation of Daniel, offers a charged, polemical treatment of different approaches to deciphering the referents of Daniel's visions. This is not the case in this *terg^wāmē*. It presents itself as a collection of tradition, drawing on previous, largely unnamed commentators in its work.⁴⁵ It is capable of polemic,

43 One example is the popular early-twentieth century *Scofield Reference Bible* (ed. C. I. Scofield [New York: Oxford University Press, 1917]), which reflected and influenced the development of dispensationalist fundamentalism. This Bible includes headings for each of the four animals in Daniel 7, which read: "(1) The world-empire of Nebuchadnezzar ... (2) The world-empire of Media-Persia ... (3) The world-empire of Greece under Alexander ... (4) The Roman world-empire." This four-kingdom scheme has often led to an expectation of a restored Roman empire before the eschaton. This led many fundamentalists to speculate that Benito Mussolini, who sought to restore the Roman Empire, was the Antichrist (Matthew Avery Sutton, *American Apocalypse: A History of Modern Evangelicalism* [Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 2017], 213–17).

44 Cf. Joel Richardson, *The Islamic Antichrist* (Washington, DC: WND Books, 2015).

45 እለ : ተጋብኡ : መተርጎማን : ክቡራን : ዕውቃን ("Those glorious, renown commentators, who have been collected"; T12.3a, f.78v).

but often offers multiple unattributed interpretations without any attempt to weigh or value them. In some cases interpretations drawn from Hippolytus are seamlessly incorporated without citation or comment, indicating a generally positive appraisal of his work and his usefulness as a source for understanding the text of Daniel. He is titled a saint, martyr, and bishop, and in some cases his agreement with the perspective of the commentary is emphasized (even if he is not really in agreement). Yet in its lengthy citations and paraphrases of Hippolytus, the commentator repeatedly draws attention to where the saint diverges from the perspective offered by the terg^wāmē, in one case making it clear that the interpreting angel within Daniel 7 agrees with the commentary against Hippolytus (see above).

Near the end of the terg^wāmē the commentator attempts to rationalize the incorporation of Hippolytus's work. There they note that their Antiochus Epiphanes-centered interpretation is in agreement with the "honorable and famous" commentators who were drawn upon as sources. However, Saint Hippolytus, bishop of Rome and martyr, believes Daniel is referring not to Antiochus Epiphanes, but rather to the Antichrist. They then write: "Even though [Hippolytus] does not agree with all of the commentators in this (matter), it is not appropriate to discard his commentary." They claim that Hippolytus interprets the word of the prophets with many interpretations, because this word is "hidden and deep," and what he interprets from it will be a second symbolism. The terg^wāmē continues to note that commentators adopt non-Christological readings of some prophecies, but many of the apostles interpret those same prophecies with reference to Christ. Yet their interpretations are not discarded. Likewise, although the text refers to Antiochus, Antiochus's deeds resemble what will happen with the Antichrist. The commentator says they are making this point, so that no one will "disgrace this saint and call him a fool." The commentator thus attempts to ultimately defend Hippolytus's interpretations and integrate them with their own by reading them as interpretations of the figurative meaning of the text. The need to defend this prestigious saint from the accusation of foolishness shows that the commentator is writing in a milieu where the interpretation of the fourth kingdom as the Greeks was accepted as exegetical common sense.⁴⁶ This commentator, however, makes room for the alternative insights of an ancient bishop and martyr.

46 This was the case in Syriac Christian circles: "Although Van der Kooij is right that the Greek interpretation differs from the majority view attested in Christian sources, we should be aware that in the Syriac tradition the Greek interpretation is predominant" (van Peursen, "Daniel's Four Kingdoms in the Syriac Tradition," 196).

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The Politics of Time: Epistemic Shifts and the Reception History of the Four Kingdoms Schema

Brennan Breed

1 The Articulation of Time

Time is a particularly slippery object of study.¹ As a structuring element of human experience, it lies outside the bounds of our direct perception; nevertheless, we cannot help but observe its constant, omnipresent effects. Since time is in itself imperceptible, we observe and measure it only by its impacts.² Moreover, since time appears to be ubiquitous, any division of time will necessarily be arbitrary. Yet in order to conceive of time, we must make such arbitrary distinctions. As systems-theoreticians G. Spencer-Brown and Niklas Luhmann have demonstrated, the drawing of distinctions, of delimitation and articulation, must precede any and every act of indication or description.³ Time is a particularly rich index of the necessity of articulation precisely because of its simultaneous ubiquity and imperceptibility.

Thinking about time requires us to study changes in objects that reveal the passage of time, which in turn requires us to articulate different moments in time by which to measure that change. *Periodization* is the always-constructive act of articulating time into different, distinguishable objects for purposes of measurement and analysis. Even the articulation of a period of time as seemingly natural as a day is a constructive act of periodization. Not only is a twenty-four hour cycle arbitrary from any cosmic perspective other than that of the earth: even within the limits of an anthropocentric perspective, various cultures begin and end their counting of days at different moments.⁴ Some start with daybreak, others nightfall, while still others switch from one day to

1 W. H. Newton-Smith, *The Structure of Time* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980), 1–4.

2 For a general introduction to the analysis of time, see Carlo Rovelli, *The Order of Time*, trans. S. Carnell and E. Segre (New York: Riverhead, 2018).

3 As Spencer-Brown writes, “We cannot make an indication without drawing a distinction” (*Laws of Form* [London: George Allen & Unwin, 1969], 1). Luhmann and Spencer-Brown helpfully point out the radical contingency of distinctions and their incommensurability when compared. See Nicholas Luhmann, “Kultur Als Historischer Begriff,” in *Gesellschaftsstruktur und Semantik: Studien zur Wissenssoziologie der modernen Gesellschaft: Band 4* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1995), 40–47.

4 For an overview, see Leofranc Holford-Strevens, *The History of Time: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 1–17.

another at a fairly arbitrary moment in the midst of the night. There is no objectively correct way to articulate a day, because the time period of a day does not pre-exist its articulation.

Yet if one wants to think of change, to identify and organize a narrative account of anything, or to try and conceive of anything spanning various moments of change, then one must articulate time. All of these acts are constructive, and all function according to different logics. In his influential book *L'Ordre du Temps*, Krzysztof Pomian discerns "four ways of visualizing time, of translating it into signs" and manipulating it.⁵ The first category Pomian names is "chronometry," which refers to the quantitative practice of measuring temporal intervals, such as days, weeks, and years, generally with reference to natural cycles of light, but sometimes to cultural occurrences like the Greek Olympiads. Second, Pomian distinguishes "chronography," the basic, qualitative annalistic description of events and facts as observed in time, like a chronicle that tends to focus on human activity and human agents. Chronology describes the ordering and synchronizing chronography within a chronometrical frame: that is, the charting of events correctly within the measure of days, months, and years in a serial fashion. Chronology is thus the first step in the narration of time, and it can include the subdivision of time into periods.

Pomian finally distinguishes a fourth sense of time, which he names chronosophy. He explains that chronosophy is the

integration of the past, the present and the future of an object under study into one image, or a description of its future, in order to complete its past and present. Every chronosophy is therefore dependent upon some procedure supposed to predict the future, sometimes a very distant one, with a reasonable if not absolute certainty. The essential questions of every chronosophy are either those of intelligibility or those of meaning of particular events (or facts) of some segment of history or the history taken as a whole.⁶

Chronosophy is thus the articulation of history's "purpose" that is generally identifiable with "an agent acting purposefully," like God, or the *Weltgeist*, or

5 Krzysztof Pomian, *L'ordre du temps*, Bibliothèque des Histoires (Paris: Gallimard, 1984). See also Krzysztof Pomian, "Astrology as a Naturalistic Theology of History," in *Astrologi Hallucinati: Stars and the End of the World in Luther's Time*, ed. Paola Zambelli (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1986), 29–43; Krzysztof Pomian, "La crise de l'avenir," *Le Débat* 7 (1980): 5–17, reprinted in *Sur l'histoire* (Paris: Gallimard, 1999), 233–62.

6 Pomian, "Astrology," 29.

the psychology of human agents.⁷ Any theology or philosophy or psychology of history that tries to find meaning of history itself, or a structure and thus significance within history itself, is an effort of chronosophy. Thus chronosophy is not simply the narration of time, but it is the synthesis of multiple narratives into a larger meaning. Pomian's categories helpfully disentangle different modes of time-representation and allow for more careful comparative and analytical work.

The articulation, organization and conceptualization of time is a powerful act, and is thus often explicitly a political act. In the ancient Near East, for instance, we can find evidence of politically and ritually inflected chronometry that adumbrates the cycles of nature, such as the annual *Akitu* festival.⁸ In the Hebrew Bible, the chronological location of events is often measured in terms of political leaders (e.g., Amos 1:1), even after the time of local monarchies (e.g., Ruth 1:1; Hosea 1:1; Neh 12:47; 1 Chron 3:13; 5:10), and much of the chronological recording of events in the ancient Near East takes the form of royal annals constructed for the administration of the king.⁹

In the Hebrew Bible, we can also see evidence of sophisticated political chronosophies, most clearly in the compilation of the Torah and Deuteronomistic History that begins with creation and ends with the destruction of Israel and Judah.¹⁰ This required many separate narratives to be synthesized and organized into one contemporaneous framework.¹¹ But the book of Daniel is also

7 Pomian, "Astrology," 29–30.

8 See Julye Bidmead, *The Akitu Festival: Religious Continuity and Royal Legitimation in Mesopotamia* (Piscataway: Gorgias, 2014).

9 See Mette Bundvad, "Defending the Concept of Time in the Hebrew Bible," *SJOT* 28 (2014): 278–95; Gershon Brin, *The Concept of Time in the Bible and the Dead Sea Scrolls*, STDJ 39 (Leiden: Brill, 2001); note Bundvad's discussion of Sacha Stern, *Time and Process in Ancient Judaism* (Oxford: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2003) in Bundvad, "Defending the Concept of Time," 282–93.

10 See Marc Brettler, "Cyclical and Teleological Time in the Hebrew Bible," in *Time and Temporality in the Ancient World*, ed. R. M. Rosen (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, 2004), 111–28.

11 See the discussion of Alfred Gell's statement that time "allows for the co-ordination of diverse processes; biological processes with social ones, psychological or subjective processes with objective, clock-timed ones, and so forth," in Bundvad, "Defending the Concept of Time," 292, quoting from Alfred Gell, *The Anthropology of Time: Cultural Constructions of Temporal Maps and Images* (Oxford and Dulles, VA: Berg, 1992), 316. Also note Robert Kawashima's discussion of "Zielinski's law" in *Biblical Narrative and the Death of the Rhapsode*, ISBL (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), 129–59. Zielinski's law consists of the observation that Homer never depicts events occurring simultaneously, at the same time—that is, Homer's narrative clock never stops ticking, as opposed to the biblical narratives, which often set several storylines in contemporaneous frameworks that are tied together with literary devices such as flashbacks.

notable for its intense interest in all four modes of representing time, including the marking and counting of days and blocks of ritual time (e.g., Daniel 9), its careful annalistic recounting of Hellenistic history (e.g., Daniel 10–12) and its intense fascination with chronology and the ordering of events.¹² But perhaps the most defining characteristic of the book of Daniel, as well as its reception history, is its distinctive chronosophy, epitomized in the four kingdoms schema of chapters 2 and 7: namely, a theology of history that focuses on ultimate divine control over the cosmos with a particular emphasis on the periodization of unjust political sovereigns.

Politicized chronosophy is not unique to the ancient Near East. As Dipesh Chakrabarty and Kathleen Davis have argued, dominant political powers throughout history consistently define and organize periods of time to consolidate their power, especially over groups that they consider “others.” In his book *Provincializing Europe*, Chakrabarty explains that the European narrative of secularization enabled the colonial project through its use of “historical time as a measure of the cultural difference” between Europe’s center and the colonial periphery.¹³ Kathleen Davis’s monograph *Periodization and Sovereignty* analyzes the political uses of historical periodization, and in particular the distinction between mediaeval and modern periods. Davis argues that the scholarly concepts of feudalism and secularization emerge from arguments about the nature of political sovereignty precisely as a justifying tool for colonialism. As Davis writes, “the history of periodization is juridical, and it advances through struggles over the definition and location of sovereignty.”¹⁴ Davis notes that periodization remains a powerful tool of sovereign power in both center and periphery even today.

The development of the four kingdoms schema throughout history demonstrates the diverse political effects of chronosophical constructions, as it has been one of the most influential time-structuring devices ever employed.¹⁵ Moreover, it has often been the site of contestation, usually of a political nature, over the nature of time-structuring devices themselves. The four kingdoms

12 See Samuel Ballentine, “The Future Beyond the End: Lessons from History by Herodotus and Daniel,” *PRSt* 43 (2016): 145–59; Paul Niskanen, *The Human and the Divine in History: Herodotus and the Book of Daniel*, JSOTSup 396 (London: T&T Clark, 2004).

13 Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 6.

14 Kathleen Davis, *Periodization and Sovereignty: How Ideas of Feudalism and Secularization Govern the Politics of Time* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 6.

15 See Brennan Breed, “Daniel’s Four Kingdoms Schema: A History of Re-writing World History,” *Int* 71 (2017): 178–89; Carol A. Newsom, “Rhyme and Reason: The Historical Résumé in Israelite and Early Jewish Thought,” in *Congress Volume Leiden 2004*, ed. A. Lemaire, VTSup 109 (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 215–33.

schema is an intriguing test case for understanding the politics of time because the device explicitly focuses on transitions in political sovereignty, control over time and space, and the impact of the past on the unfolding of the future.¹⁶ It is important to notice that the schema itself does not have a natural or necessary political orientation, as it is put to a variety of uses even before it acquires the different forms that it takes in the book of Daniel. It likely served as political propaganda for several ancient empires. The earliest deployments of this schema are found in the works of Herodotus and Ctesias, historians of the fifth and fourth centuries BCE, who use this order of kingdoms to frame their discussion of the rise of Persia.¹⁷ While both historians are Greek, the schema bears the marks of Persian royal propaganda—most tellingly, they mention Media instead of Babylon in their historical scheme, which only makes sense from a Persian historical and geographical perspective. Centuries later, Roman historians such as Polybius, Tacitus and Appian would adapt the schema to justify their own city's rapid ascendancy to regional sovereignty.¹⁸

The four kingdoms scheme was also appropriated by at least two groups that lacked sovereignty: Second Temple Jews, as in the Fourth Sybilline Oracle and Tobit, and inhabitants of Asia who imagined that the empire would return from Greece to Persia.¹⁹ Thus, the four kingdoms schema does not have a necessary political message or predetermined political ends: it is a tool, and like any tool it presents a panoply of potential uses. Elsewhere I have suggested that, after analyzing both text and its hermeneutical trajectories, one can determine a given text's "degrees of mobility," also called "degrees of freedom,"

16 See Carol A. Newsom with Brennan Breed, *Daniel: A Commentary*, OTL (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2014), 59–97.

17 Herodotus 1.95, 130, 184; Ctesias, *FGrHist* 688 F.5. For attempted reconstructions of the origins and transmission of the schema, see David Flusser, "The Four Empires in the Fourth Sibyl and in the Book of Daniel," *IOS* 2 (1972): 148–75; Joseph Swain, "The Theory of the Four Monarchies: Opposition History under the Roman Empire," *CP* 35 (1940): 1–21; Arnaldo Momigliano, "The Origins of Universal History," in *The Poet and the Historian: Essays in Literary and Historical Biblical Criticism*, ed. R. Friedman, HSS 26 (Chico: Scholars Press, 1983), 133–55. For a critique of Swain and Flusser's theory of transmission, see Josef Wiesehöfer, "Vom 'oberen Asien' zur 'gesamten bewohnten Welt': Die hellenistische-römische Weltreiche-Theorie," in *Europa, Tausendjähriges Reich und Neue Welt: Zwei Jahrtausende Geschichte und Utopie in der Rezeption des Danielbuches*, ed. Mariano Delgado, Klaus Koch, and Edgar Marsch (Stuttgart: Universitätsverlag Freiburg Schweiz, 2003), 66–83.

18 See Polybius 38.22; Tacitus, *Hist.* 5.8–9; Appian, *Preface* 9; Dionysius of Halicarnassus 1.2–2.4; and the fragment attributed to Aemilius Sura, found in Velleius Paterculus. Note the criticism of Swain's understanding of Sura by Doron Mendels, "The Five Empires: A Note on a Hellenistic Topos," *AJP* 102 (1981): 330–37.

19 Swain, "The Theory of the Four Monarchies," 4–12; Flusser, "The Four Empires," 149–54.

in biblical texts.²⁰ I have argued that a point of flexion in the four kingdoms schema emerges for readers based on their social location—to be precise, depending on whether or not they have a share of power in the political order that surrounds them. Daniel's four kingdoms schema provides an intriguing opportunity to see how political, cultural and military power inflects the various readings of sacred texts.²¹

Some scholars have criticized the act of historical periodization. As Frederic Jameson writes, periodization tends to “facile totalization, a seamless web of phenomena which, in its own way, ‘expresses’ some unified inner truth—a world-view or a period style or a set of structural categories which marks the whole length and breadth of the ‘period’ in question. Yet such an impression is fatally reductive.”²² He points out both a “synchronic version of the problem: that of the status of the individual period ... and a diachronic one, in which history is seen in some linear way as the succession of such periods, stages, or moments.”²³ As Jameson writes, “[i]ndividual period formulations always secretly imply or project narratives or stories—narrative representations—of the historical sequence in which such individual periods take their place and from which they derive their significance.”²⁴ For example, the scholarly commonplace in use since the time of Petrarch, namely “Antiquity, Dark Ages, Renaissance,” enacts a death-rebirth metaphor that is clearly reductionist.

And yet, this very schema, and many like it, proves helpful, and there is even some truth to it. Thus periodization *can* be illuminating, but the construction of a historical period also necessarily obscures much that one could otherwise see. Hence, there is an undeniably political aspect to any act of periodization: what to obscure, and what to focalize? Even Jameson agrees with G. Spencer-Brown that, for the purposes of analysis, we *must* periodize, as it is required for thinking about history.²⁵ As Ernst Bloch argues, the question of *how* to periodize is the point of historiographical work itself, even if we must always note its failures.²⁶ Even Jacques Le Goff, whose book titled *Must We Divide History Into Periods?*, answers in a resounding “yes,” nevertheless writes:

20 See Brennan Breed, *Nomadic Text: A Theory of Biblical Reception History*, ISBL (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2014), 161, 168, 182.

21 Breed, “Daniel’s Four Kingdoms,” 178–89.

22 Frederic Jameson, *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982), 27.

23 Jameson, *Political Unconscious*, 28.

24 Jameson, *Political Unconscious*, 28.

25 Jameson, *Political Unconscious*, 218.

26 Ernst Bloch, “Nonsynchronism and the Obligation to Its Dialectics,” trans. Mark Ritter, *New German Critique* 11 (1977): 22–38.

“[t]here is nothing neutral, or innocent, about cutting time up into smaller parts ... periodization is more than a mere collection of chronological units. It contains also the idea of transition ... both the temporal continuity this succession embodies and the rupture of temporal continuity.”²⁷

So, for the purposes of this essay, I too must periodize, and accept the severely reductionist problems inherent in the very act. In the limited space I have here, I will sketch the development of the four kingdoms schema in Christian Western Europe from Late Antiquity to Early Modernity, focusing on moments of transition between different conceptions of both time and sovereignty. Future study of Jewish and Muslim interactions with the four kingdoms schema and a survey of Eastern European, Asian, African and American Christian traditions would greatly enrich this argument.

2 The Four Kingdoms Schema from Ancient Rome to Late Antiquity

After Rome established unquestionable hegemony over the Mediterranean world in the last century before the Common Era, most Jews and Christians who engaged with Daniel’s schema re-identified the fourth kingdom as imperial Rome (Dan 2:40–44; 7:7–11, 23–27; cf. 4 Ezra 12:11–12). In order to maintain the fourfold schema, readers of Daniel 2 and 7 tended to displace the Hellenistic empires from the fourth to the third position, and then combine Media and Persia to both occupy the second kingdom’s position in the visions (e.g., Sib. Or. 4.49–101). Jewish and Christian interpreters alike before the fourth century CE respected Rome’s power and often adopted many Roman cultural practices, but they nevertheless typically identified Rome as an evil force opposed to the will of God (cf. Hippolytus, *Comm. Dan.* 4.8; but note moderating positions by Tertullian, *Apol.* 23, Josephus, *Ant.* 10.267, and Origen, *C. Cels.* 6.46).²⁸

With the rise of Constantine the Great and his patronage of Christianity in the early fourth century CE, however, many Christians living under the shadow of Rome began to think differently about their political context. Jerome, for example, reinterpreted the significance of the fourth empire in the schema, but still emphasized its weakness and inevitable demise (*Expl. Dan.* 7.8). Yet others saw Rome as a bridge between the fourth empire and the fifth, unending

27 Jacques Le Goff, *Must We Divide History Into Periods?*, trans. Malcolm DeBevoise (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017), 2.

28 See also Seth Schwartz, “‘Rabbinic Culture’ and Roman Culture,” in *Rabbinic Texts and the History of Late-Roman Palestine*, ed. Martin Goodman and Philip Alexander (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 283–99. See also Hayim Lapin, *Rabbis as Romans: The Rabbinic Movement in Palestine, 100–400 CE* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

kingdom of the “holy ones” (Dan 7:18, 27). Eusebius, in a sermon in praise of Constantine, applied Dan 7:18 (“the holy ones of the Most High shall receive the kingdom”) to the transition of Roman imperial power from Constantine to his sons, thus reinterpreting the fourth kingdom as one that transitions seamlessly into the fifth empire of the saints.²⁹ In Eusebius’s view, the Empire’s ruler acknowledged the sovereignty of the true God (cf. Dan 6:26–27), and thus the fourth kingdom had been sanctified, inaugurating a universal peace. The promised future fifth kingdom would then be merely a continuation and spiritualization of this fourth kingdom, which would rule until the end of time.

Christians living in the sphere of Roman power tended to agree with Eusebius’s interpretation of Daniel’s schema (Cyril, *Catech.* 15.12; Eusebius, *Dem. ev.* 25, Lactantius, *Inst.* 7.16, Victorinus of Pettau, *Comm. Apoc.* 17.9), though Augustine famously dismissed the importance of the four kingdoms schema and the centrality of the Roman Empire for interpreting sacred history (*Civ.* 20.23). Jerome’s discussion of the four kingdoms in his Daniel commentary became the standard interpretation through the mediaeval period through its adoption in the *Glossa Ordinaria* (*Expl. Dan.* 1.2.31–35; 2.7.8), yet it was Paulus Orosius, a Spanish priest mentored by Augustine but also influenced by Jerome, who defined the Latin Christian interpretation of Daniel’s schema for the next millennium. Orosius wrote a history “against the pagans” in 416 CE at Augustine’s request, but he decided to side with Jerome on the status of the Roman Empire and the central importance of the four kingdom schema for understanding history.³⁰ Like Jerome, Orosius was not shy about equating the progress of the Roman Empire with God’s providential activity in history, which (he claimed) would last until the end of time. As Jennifer Harris argues, Orosius presents the “first real attempt at a world history using documentary sources and presenting an argument for the meaning of history,” and it was remarkably influential likely because of that fact.³¹ The German migrations and decomposition of Roman imperial control over Western Europe

29 See Gerhard Podskalsky, *Byzantinische Reicheschatologie: Die Periodisierung der Weltgeschichte in den vier Grossreichen (Dan 2 und 7) und dem tausendjährigen Friedensreiche (Apok. 20)* (Munich: Fink, 1972), 11–13, and Gerbern S. Oegema, *Early Judaism and Modern Culture: Literature and Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011), 162–63.

30 Augustine strove to keep sacred and secular history separate after the disappointment of the fall of Rome for many Christians who had pinned their theological hopes on the Empire’s power. But over time, political Augustinianism re-assimilated secular history to the sacred story, and by the twelfth century, Otto of Friesing writes that his secular history only focuses on one city, the City of God, since all emperors and subjects after Constantine are Christian. See Le Goff, *Must We Divide History*, 33.

31 Jennifer Harris, “The Bible and the Meaning of History in the Middle Ages,” in *The Practice of the Bible in the Middle Ages: Production, Reception, and Performance in Western*

tested Christian faith in the theory that Rome, and Christian imperial power, would survive until the end of time. In the Roman East, of course, the continuing Roman Empire controlled by Constantinople did not face this theological quandary.

Even so, the multiple Christian and pagan kingdoms that emerged in Europe and North Africa in the fifth and sixth centuries were obviously not one universal empire, and the seeming end of Roman power proved a theological and political puzzle. Orosius presented one potential solution to the problem, and opened the possibility of identifying the Roman Empire with diverse Christian polities. That is, the Christian religion itself soon emerged as a symbolic, spiritual “empire of Christ” that claimed the allegiance of diverse ethnicities (Goths, Franks, Britons, etc.) and replaced the concrete and unified political universality of the former Roman Empire. Thus the sacred history of the Church continued unbroken; Rome’s political-theological dominion and the concept of “Christian lands” spanned from the Atlantic to Persia.³² Other attempts to identify Rome’s demise with the rise of another concrete political entity as the fifth kingdom that superseded Rome—such as the Vandals, as presented in the late fifth-century Arian recension of the Donatist *Liber genealogus*—proved less influential over time.³³ In Western Europe during the fifth and sixth centuries CE, new conceptions of space and time made the Orosian model more powerful, and the innovation of *translatio imperii* (“translation of empire”) required these conceptual shifts to function.

Orosius’s synthesis of Christian theology and the secular state dominated mediaeval universal and national histories well after the fall of the Western Roman Empire. Any mediaeval library with a modest collection contained Orosius’s work, and it found explicit intellectual purchase in England through Alfred the Great, who had it translated into Old English and modified to support his claims to kingship, in Germany through Otto of Freising, who acknowledged his debt to Orosius in his famous work of universal history, in Spain through the double works of the *Estoria of Espanna* and the *General Estoria*

Christianity, ed. Susan Boynton and Diane J. Reilly (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), 87.

32 See Hervé Inglebert, “Introduction: Late Antique Conceptions of Late Antiquity,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Late Antiquity*, ed. S. F. Johnson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 3–28.

33 Jonathan Conant, “Donatism in the Fifth and Sixth Centuries,” in *The Donatist Schism: Controversy and Contexts*, ed. Richard Miles (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2016), 352–53.

authorized by Alfonso X of Castile, and in many other regions of Europe.³⁴ Thus, the technology of the universal history emerged as a powerful device for authorizing particular local sovereigns: chronometry, chronography, and chronology synthesized into a powerful chronosophy that provided temporal legitimation for over a millennium.³⁵

The disappearance of the Western Roman Empire, however, did present a particularly acute problem even for Orosius's paradigm, and provoked much thinking about history itself throughout Europe. The cosmic salvation history of Christianity had matched up so well with the imperial rhetoric of Rome, but the Germanic invasions introduced a discontinuity into the dominant epistemic paradigm. In the end, the four kingdoms schema helped a variety of post-imperial political powers re-create a story that made sense of their world. First was Cassiodorus, who worked as a Roman Senator working as a senior administrative official for the ruling Ostrogoth king, Theoderic, in the sixth century CE. Cassiodorus's position likely influenced his choice to frame his work of universal history, the *Chronica*, as an uninterrupted chain of divinely sanctioned imperial continuity from ancient Rome to the Goth Eutharic's consulship.³⁶ This is the earliest known extension of the *translatio imperii* to a sovereign hailing from a Germanic tribe.

Not everyone agreed: Isidore of Seville, for example, contested the idea that there was a still-existing Roman empire, and supported the diverse local sovereigns who had risen in its place—precisely because the Eastern Roman Emperor Justinian was attempting to conquer Isidore's native Spain.³⁷ Thus, the imminent political context of various Christian theological historians

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- 34 See A. Fiebig, "vier tier wilde. Weltdeutung nach Daniel in der 'Kaiserchronik,'" in *Deutsche Literatur und Sprache von 1050–1200: Festschrift für Ursula Hennig zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. A. Fiebig and H.-J. Schiewer (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1995), 27–49; Francis Leneghan, "Translatio Imperii: The Old English Orosius and the Rise of Wessex," *Anglia* 133 (2015): 656–705; Ernst Breisach, *Historiography: Ancient, Medieval and Modern* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 103–104; Rosa M. Rodriguez, "The Pillars of Hercules: The Estoria of Espana (Escorial, Y.I.2) as a Universal Chronicle," in *Universal Chronicles in the High Middle Ages*, ed. Michele Campopiano and Henry Bainton (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2017), 223–54; and Claudia Wittig, "Political Didacticism in the Twelfth Century: The Middle-High German *Kaiserchronik*," in *Universal Chronicles in the High Middle Ages*, ed. Michele Campopiano and Henry Bainton (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2017).
- 35 H.-W. Goetz, "The Concept of Time in the Historiography of the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries," in *Medieval Concepts of the Past: Ritual, Memory, and Historiography*, ed. G. Althoff, J. Fried, and P. J. Geary (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 139–66.
- 36 See Arne Soby Christensen, *Cassiodorus, Jordanes and the History of the Goths: Studies in a Migration Myth* (Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum Press, 2002), 54–83.
- 37 See Jamie Wood, *The Politics of Identity in Visigothic Spain: Religion and Power in the Histories of Isidore of Seville* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 208–30.

impacted their decisions, as likely did the opinions of their temporal sovereigns. In Eastern Europe, the Byzantine and later Russian empires argued that they were the legitimate successors of Rome within the four kingdoms schema, whereas in the West the courts of Charlemagne and Otto were eager to cast themselves as the legitimate successors of Rome in Orosius's historical framework. For example, Frechulf of Lisieux's ninth century universal *Chronicle* uses the four kingdoms schema to trace the divine gift of sovereignty from Assyria through the Medes and Persians to the Greeks, then to the Caesars and finally to the Carolingian dynasty.³⁸ In the turmoil of Late Antiquity and the transition to the mediaeval period, the chronosophy of the extended four kingdoms schema provided a theological and intellectual grounding for a wide variety of claims to temporal sovereignty, both universal and local. The central motif of the four kingdoms scheme, after all, is the theological explanation of political transition in both a spatial and temporal sense, which worked perfectly to explain the precise turmoil of the early mediaeval period while retaining the implicit salvation history that was important to Christianity. As a result, a new sense of time emerged in the transition from Late Antiquity, which depended on the imperial Roman epitome of time, to new mediaeval sensibilities about time and space.

3 The Four Kingdoms Schema from Late Antiquity to Mediaeval Europe

I will briefly present a chronosophical representation from the mediaeval period that attempts to summarize the tremendous political impact of the technology of the universal history structured as a four kingdoms schema: namely, the thirteenth century Hereford map. I have chosen this representation because it demonstrates a potential interpretation of the text of the book of Daniel that was actualized fairly consistently throughout the mediaeval period.³⁹ This example connects time and space to make narrative sense of the cosmos and universal history after the dissolution of the Roman Empire.

38 See Graeme Ward, "All Roads Lead to Rome? Frechulf of Lisieux, Augustine and Orosius," *EME* 22 (2014): 492–505.

39 See Mariano Delgado, Klaus Koch, Edgar Marsch, eds., *Europa, Tausendjähriges Reich und Neue Welt: zwei Jahrtausende Geschichte und Utopie in der Rezeption des Danielbuches* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2003); Hans Thomas, "Translatio Imperii," *Lexikon des Mittelalters*, ed. Robert Auty et al. (Munich: Lexma, 1997), 8:944–46; Werner Goez, *Translatio Imperii: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Geschichtsdenkens und der politischen Theorien im Mittelalter und in der frühen Neuzeit* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1958).

Maps are never neutral, objective representations of space.⁴⁰ As J. B. Harley has argued, “[b]oth in their selectivity of content and in their signs and styles of representation, maps are a way of conceiving, articulating, and structuring the human world which is biased towards, promoted by, and exerts influence upon particular sets of social relations.”⁴¹ Invariably, maps filter information and impose a particular hermeneutic of time onto space. Moreover, maps always center a particular time—for example, the “age of empires”—and this often reflects a particular political designation. Likewise, chronological charts are never purely temporal: they necessarily center the timelines of particular geographic regions.⁴² Thus, maps are also-always temporal, and chronological charts are also-always spatial, and both reflect political orientations of the one who constructs the visual organization. And in the Mediaeval and Early Modern periods, cartographers and chronographers of the Christian West quite often reflected the political theology of the four kingdoms schema.⁴³ Fra Paolino Veneto, an early fourteenth century Minorite friar, explicitly endorsed the crucial importance of the four kingdoms schema for mapmaking:

I think that it is not just difficult but impossible without a world map to make [oneself] an image of, or even for the mind to grasp, what is said of the children and grandchildren of Noah and of the Four Kingdoms and other nations and regions, both in divine and human writings. There is needed moreover a two-fold map, [composed] of painting and writing. Nor will you say one is sufficient without the other, because painting without writing indicates regions or nations unclearly, [and] writing without the aid of painting truly does not mark the boundaries of the provinces of a region ...⁴⁴

40 See John Pickles, *A History of Spaces: Cartographic Reason, Mapping and the Geo-Coded World* (London: Routledge, 2004).

41 J. B. Harley, “Maps, Knowledge, and Power,” in *The Iconography of Landscape: Essays on the Symbolic Representation, Design, and Use of Past Environments*, ed. Denis Cosgrove and Stephen Daniels (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 278. See also Jeremy Crampton and Stuart Elden, eds., *Space, Knowledge and Power: Foucault and Geography* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2007).

42 See Daniel Rosenberg and Anthony Grafton, *Cartographies of Time: A History of the Timeline* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2010).

43 Rosenberg and Grafton, *Cartographies of Time*, 50–58.

44 Translated and quoted by Jürgen Schulz, “Jacopo de’ Barbari’s View of Venice: Map Making, City Views, and Moralized Geography before the Year 1500,” *ArB* 60 (1978): 425–74, esp. 452.

Why would Fra Paolino claim that one of the most important functions of mediaeval cartographers is to help viewers grasp the meaning of the four kingdoms? To understand, we must revisit Paulus Orosius. In his universal history, Orosius notes the geographic location of Alexander's famed "northern altars" that he built in relation to the four empires schema: "That the Macedonian Empire was in the North is obvious both from its geographical position and the altars of Alexander the Great which stand to this day near the Rhiplean Mountains."⁴⁵ Orosius here suggests that "each of the four Empires was thought to have had a monument representative of its position—but Orosius makes no mention of the other three."⁴⁶ In the developed form of the *translatio imperii* scheme, found already in the Carolingian era, the idea that the empires were moving from East to West added another directional vector to the four kingdoms schema.⁴⁷

In the mid-twelfth century, the German bishop Otto of Friesing wrote a defining work of mediaeval historiography that explicitly frames the history of the world with the four kingdom schema.⁴⁸ Otto also orients time and the transfer of sacred rule as a movement through space from east to west, and includes the transfer of knowledge (later understood as *translatio studii*).⁴⁹ Ordericus Vitalis in Normandy and Richard de Bury with Britain are examples

45 Paulus Orosius, *The Seven Books of History against the Pagans: The Apology of Paulus Orosius*, trans. Irving Woodworth Raymond (New York: Columbia University Press, 1936), 321.

46 Stephen McKenzie, "Conquest Landmarks and the Medieval World Image" (PhD diss., University of Adelaide), 2000, 103.

47 Alciun makes this connection in his *Comentarii in Apocalypsin* on Rev 7:1–3. See Bruce Eastwood, *Ordering the Heavens: Roman Astronomy and Cosmology in the Carolingian Renaissance* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 169–70. Also note the prominent frescoes of the four kingdoms on the walls of Charlemagne's palace at Ingelheim. See Jacob Burckhardt, *Italian Renaissance Painting According to Genres*, trans. D. Britt and C. Beamish (Los Angeles: Getty, 2005), 68. See also Notker the Stammerer's use of the statue of Daniel 2 in his *Notkeri Balbuli Gesta Karoli Magni imperatoris*, ed. H. F. Haefele, MGH SRG 12 (Berlin: Weidmann, 1959), 1; and Lewis Thorpe, *Einhart and Notker the Stammerer: Two Lives of Charlemagne* (Baltimore: Penguin, 1969), 93.

48 On the east-west progression, see Allesandro Scafi, *Mapping Paradise: A History of Heaven on Earth* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 127. See also R. Deutinger, "Engel oder Wolf? Otto von Freising in den geistigen Auseinandersetzungen seiner Zeit," in *Ars und Scientia im Mittelalter und in der Frühen Neuzeit: Ergebnisse interdisziplinärer Forschung: Georg Wieland zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed., C. Dietl and D. Helsingher (Tübingen and Basel: Francke, 2002), 31–46.

49 "And let it be observed that because all human learning began in the Orient and will end in the Occident, the mutability and disappearance of all things will be demonstrated" (Otto, Bishop of Freising, *The Two Cities: A Chronicle of Universal History to the Year 1146 A.D.*, trans. C. Mierow, ed. A. Evans and C. Knapp [New York: Columbia University Press,

of other mediaeval historians who agree with Otto of Freising's concept, but each suggests that the movement of empire and learning found its *telos* in his own emerging nation.⁵⁰

These geographic models of power and knowledge structured the mediaeval practice of constructing universal maps, or *mappae mundi*.⁵¹ As Scafi notes, "the importance of the four kingdoms in human history was indicated on mediaeval maps of the world by visual or textual references to their rulers, people, or monuments."⁵² Particular landmarks associated with the four kingdoms on mediaeval maps generally follow Orosius, which was "designed to form a square shape by placing Macedonia and Carthage to the north and south," can be found on many mediaeval maps.⁵³ This combination of geography and history was deployed in the service of a particular political theology of mediaeval Europe. As Rudolf Simek notes, mediaeval world maps did not attempt to represent the world by a physically accurate model, and they "were not conceived as an aid for travelers." Instead, these maps of the world "served as physical abbreviations of all reality, incorporating both the material and the spiritual world."⁵⁴

For example, let us consider the Hereford map, which dates to the late thirteenth century in England.⁵⁵ It is the largest extant mediaeval map, and hung for centuries unnoticed on the wall of a choir aisle. It is based on earlier theological maps such as the famous map of Beatus of Liebana, found in the codices of his apocalyptic commentary on Daniel and Revelation, but it is much richer in its depictions.⁵⁶ The Hereford map represents four hundred and twenty towns, fifteen biblical events, many varieties of animals and plants as well as important people. At the top of the image is Christ's second coming

2002], 155). On *translatio studii*, see Ernst F. J. Worstbrock, "Translatio artium," *AKG* 47 (1965): 1–22.

50 See Jacques Le Goff, *Time, Work, and Culture in the Middle Ages*, trans. A. Goldhammer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 32–34.

51 See Naomi Reed Kline, *Maps of Medieval Thought: The Hereford Paradigm* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2001).

52 Scafi, *Mapping Paradise*, 128.

53 McKenzie, "Conquest Landmarks," 103.

54 Rudolf Simek, *Heaven and Earth in the Middle Ages: The Physical World Before Columbus*, trans. A. Hall (Woodbridge: Broydell Press, 1996), 41–43. See also Evelyn Edson, *Mapping Time and Space: How Medieval Mapmakers Viewed their World*, The British Library Studies in Map History (London: British Library, 1997), 1:2–9.

55 See Scott D. Westrem, *The Hereford Map: A Transcription and Translation of the Legends with Commentary* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2001).

56 See John Williams, "Isidore, Orosius and the Beatus Map," *Imago Mundi* 49 (1997): 7–32; Williams, *The Illustrated Beatus: A Corpus of the Illustrations in the Commentary on the Apocalypse*, 5 vols. (London: Harvey Miller, 1994–2003).

in judgment over the world, signifying both divine providence and a *telos* for the structure of the world.

At the top of the Hereford map is a marginal comment: "Orosius' description, from the *Ormesta Mundi* as is shown within," referring to the work of Orosius, including his historical structuring-device of the four kingdoms schema.⁵⁷ Since the time of Alfred the Great, the Saxons had used Orosius as justification for their claim that they had inherited the mantle of the fourth kingdom after the seeming collapse of the Carolingian empire, so his appearance in the title of the map is not a surprise.⁵⁸ Orosius is ever-present in the Hereford map, as his descriptions of history and geography serve as a major source of information.⁵⁹ Also in the margin are inscriptions that "The orb of the earth began to be surveyed by Julius Caesar," and the names of the surveyors of the east, the north and west, and the south, depicting Roman imperial authority over the globe. In the lower left corner is a picture of the emperor sending forth three commissioners by warrant under the seal of Augustus Caesar (cf. Luke 1–2). As Leneghan explains, "in this vision of world history, God showed His favour to the Romans not only by allowing them to be conquered by a relatively clement Christian people, the Goths, but also by sending His Son to redeem mankind during the *Pax Augusta*, marking the Romans out as *rerum dominos* 'masters of the World' (cf. Virgil, *Aeneid*, 1, l. 282)."⁶⁰

One can read the map as a progression of both geography and chronology, running from east to west. As Peter Barber remarks, the inclusion of "Babylon, Medea (*sic*), Macedonia, and Rome are intended to recall the four empires which had characterized human history."⁶¹ These empires are placed on the map roughly along the east-west axis in order of their historical occurrence, moving forward in time from Media in the east to Rome in the west, and beyond to the particular political and ethnic group responsible for the map who are seeking to legitimate their self-understanding of their place in the world—in the case of the Hereford world map, the English.

Babylon and Rome both have special graphic importance on the map, suggesting particular prominence in the English imagination. Their prominence is even more striking because the mapmaker did not depict any German cities on the map—that is, the historical ancestors of the Anglo-Saxons, of which

57 *Ormesta* is an abbreviation of "Or[osii] m[undi h]ist[ori]a" (Kline, *Maps of Medieval Thought*, 63–64, 184, 222).

58 Leneghan, "Translatio Imperii," 656–701.

59 See Kline, *Maps of Medieval Thought*, 186.

60 Leneghan, "Translatio Imperii," 663.

61 Peter Barber, "Medieval Maps of the World," in *The Hereford World Map: Medieval World Maps and their Context*, ed. P. D. A. Harvey (London: The British Library, 2006), 1–44.

they were well aware.⁶² Thus the Hereford map stresses the theological and political construal of the English inheritance and identity, not necessarily their geographical and biological ancestry. This is not the only *mappa mundi* to reflect Orosius's particular theological geo-chronography: the roughly contemporaneous Ebstorf map parallels the Hereford map, as well.⁶³

Thus many mediaeval theologians, historians, cartographers and iconographers conceived of the world as a fundamentally ordered space, in which disorder plays a marginal role. As Emile Mâle noted: "The Middle Ages had a passion for order. They organized art as they had organized dogma, secular learning and society."⁶⁴ Mediaeval chronological charts, as well, seek to make plain the order of human history.⁶⁵ And order suggests some kind of organizing power: namely, a sovereign. A variety of theological temporal schemas such as the six ages of the world were often used as structuring devices throughout the mediaeval period, but it was the four kingdoms schema in particular that combined divine sovereignty, the legitimation of specific secular authorities, and a unified geographic-chronological progression. This precise combination constituted the politics of time in mediaeval Europe.

4 The Four Kingdoms Schema from Mediaeval Europe to the Early Modern Period

Just as with the shift from Late Antiquity to the Mediaeval period, the series of crises which eventuated in the Early Modern world led to new political realities, a new sense of time and space, new chronometries, new chronologies and a host of new chronosophies.⁶⁶ The story of the transition from the Mediaeval to the Early Modern period can be illuminated in the progression of two chronometric devices which illuminate the shifting role of the four kingdoms schema.

62 Leneghan, "Translatio Imperii," 682.

63 See Kline, *Maps of Medieval Thought*, 220, 239.

64 Emile Mâle, *The Gothic Image: Religious Art in France of the Thirteenth Century*, trans. Dora Nussey (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1958), 1.

65 See Rosenberg and Grafton, *Cartographies of Time*.

66 See David Landes, *Revolution in Time: Clocks and the Making of the Modern World* (Cambridge: Belknap, 1983); and Amy Boesky, "Giving Time to Women: The Eternizing Project in Early Modern England," in *This Doubled Voice: Gendered Writing in Early Modern England*, ed. Danielle and Elizabeth Clarke (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000), 123–41.

The first example, a sundial on the exterior of the Cathedral of Notre-Dame-de-Strasbourg, was carved in about 1490.⁶⁷ Above the sundial, an astronomer gazes out at the skies, scrutinizing in order to understand the divisions of time, but he serves as a symbol for a technology that had existed for thousands of years. The second time-keeping device, found inside that same cathedral in the city of Strasbourg, dates to the third quarter of the sixteenth century.⁶⁸ It is an astronomical clock, and remains a mechanical wonder even today for its extraordinary complexity: it kept track of the planetary orbits, the sun and moon, solar and lunar eclipses, the zodiac, the annual calendar, and more.⁶⁹ In the span of two centuries, the experience of time itself in the city of Strasbourg radically transformed. Strasbourg was not alone: by the sixteenth century, clocks were omnipresent in European urban centers, and had come to replace the sundial not only in technological prowess but more importantly in symbolic significance.⁷⁰ Public clocks represented a shift in the phenomenology and meaning of time, which informed conceptions of sovereignty that emerged in a tumultuous moment in political history.

Sometime in the late-thirteenth or early-fourteenth century, a series of technological innovations made possible a clock mechanism that kept fairly accurate time.⁷¹ While many of these early marvels were housed in monasteries to help religious orders keep accurate prayer schedules, by 1370 Charles v installed striking clocks in several of his residences and constructed a public clock at the Louvre. Charles then ordered that all the diverse bells of Paris be set according to the clock at the Palais-Royal, the Horloge du Palais.⁷² While the story is complex, one can from that moment trace the development of state control over the maintenance and ordering of time.⁷³ According to

67 Rovelli, *Order of Time*, 59–60.

68 The first astronomical clock in Strasbourg was built between 1352 and 1354, but was dismantled in 1572 when the second, much more mechanically and artistically complex astronomical clock began construction.

69 Günther Oestmann, *Die Strassburger Münsteruhr: Funktion und Bedeutung eines Kosmos-Modells des 16. Jahrhunderts*, 2nd ed. (Berlin: Verlag für Geschichte der Naturwissenschaften und der Technik, 2000); Henri Bach, Jean-Pierre Rieb, and Robert Wilhelm, *Les trois horloges astronomiques de la Cathédrale de Strasbourg* (Strasbourg: Ronald Hirlé, 1992); Henry C. King and John R. Millburn, *Geared to the Stars: The Evolution of Planetariums, Orreries, and Astronomical Clocks* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978).

70 See Le Goff, *Time, Work, and Culture*, 49–50.

71 Gerhard Dohrn-van Rossum, *History of the Hour: Clocks and Modern Temporal Orders*, trans. Thomas Dunlap (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 103–12.

72 Carlo Cippola, *Clocks and Culture, 1300–1700* (New York: Norton, 2003), 33–34. But note the critique by Dohrn-van Rossum, *History of the Hour*, 217–19.

73 Le Goff, *Time, Work, and Culture*, 49–50. Note also the caution from Dohrn-van Rossum, *History of the Hour*, 13, 127.

Landes, this act underscores the primacy of royal power; as Le Goff concludes, the new technologically measured, rational time thus became the time of the state.⁷⁴ By the early-fifteenth century, regional governments required clocks in the urban centers of Europe by administrative decree.

As Le Goff argues, “The disturbance of the chronological framework in the fourteenth century was also a mental and spiritual disturbance.”⁷⁵ European city dwellers now were expected to regulate their activities, their business, and their spiritual lives by the clock. The clock became the foundational political metaphor for the age: society, the state, and the bureaucracy were all now supposed to function like clockwork, individuals and groups became obsessed with saving and investing and measuring time. The divisible moments of the day were more regularly compared to quantities of money.⁷⁶ Some scholars have argued that rationalization of time also led to its secularization, but of course this is not quite true: the sacred intrudes often when a culture attempts to construct a chronosophy.⁷⁷

In Strasbourg, the first astronomical clock was finished in 1352, and was known as the clock of the three Magi.⁷⁸ At noon each day, the mechanism made figures of the magi—known for their knowledge of the heavenly bodies and grasping the significance of time—bowed their heads to Mary. By the 1540s, the first clock had ceased to function. The mathematician Christian Herlin began designing a new astronomical clock, but in 1571, Herlin passed the responsibility to his student, the scientist and philosopher Conrad Dasypodius, who spent the next four years overseeing its construction.⁷⁹ Dasypodius’s astronomical clock was not just a clock: it presented a symbolic chronosophy that strove to represent the political-theological ethos of Dasypodius’s era, and portrayed a number of symbolic conceptions of time to that effect. On the different parts of the device, one could find references to the ages of humanity, the basic outline of Christian salvation history, and the four kingdoms from Daniel.⁸⁰ In the lowest register, an image of Germany stood at the center while clock arms measured time in grand scales, including years and ages. In each corner of the frame enclosing this mechanism, one of the four kingdoms was symbolically depicted and labeled: these included Assyria, Persia, Greece and Rome. And to the left of the clock mechanism, adorning the tower for

74 Landes, *Revolution in Time*, 79; Le Goff, *Time, Work, Culture*, 49–50.

75 Le Goff, *Time, Work, and Culture*, 50.

76 Le Goff, *Time, Work, and Culture*, 51–52.

77 Le Goff, *Time, Work, and Culture*, 36.

78 Oestmann, *Die Strassburger Münsteruhr*, 15–28.

79 Oestmann, *Die Strassburger Münsteruhr*, 37–51.

80 Oestmann, *Die Strassburger Münsteruhr*, 53–84.

the weight drive, is a depiction of the statue from Nebuchadnezzar's dream in Daniel 2. As Anthony Grafton writes:

Dasypodius' work, in short, was not simply a display of the powers of modern science and technology; it was also a miniature cathedral of its own, in which the pious visitor could read the most traditional lessons about the past, the present, and the (rather abbreviated) future of the human race. Nothing mattered more about time, even here, than its end. And no evidence suggests that these images formed a less organic part of Dasypodius' design than the clockwork they concealed and interpreted.⁸¹

Dasypodius's chronosophy reflects a distinctively Protestant understanding of the four kingdoms schema from Daniel, because by the 1570s Strasbourg had broken with the Roman pontiff. Luther had established a different identification and ordering of the kingdoms, and in particular a new interpretation of the divided fourth empire of iron mixed with clay: to Luther, it represented the confessionally divided Holy Roman Empire, which remained partly Roman Catholic but was now partly Protestant.⁸² The newly solidified opposition to the image of Rome, Martin Luther's new biblical hermeneutics, a renewed sense of eschatology, and a commitment to humanist notions of scholarship led to a drastic revision of mediaeval traditions about the history of world. As Streete comments, "[r]eformed historiography is grounded in an imperially inflected eschatology. It offers a ... rethinking of 'Rome,' ancient and Roman Catholic, an imperial legitimation of the Reformed state and monarch, and a promise of the revelation to come."⁸³ Whereas the mediaeval monarchs used the four kingdoms schema to reinforce a sense of order and natural, divinely sanctioned universal authority, the Protestant use of the schema tended to focus on rupture, the surrounding threat of subjugation, and the present tumultuous final days.

81 Anthony Grafton, "Chronology and Its Discontents in Renaissance Europe: The Vicissitudes of a Tradition," in *Time: Histories and Ethnologies*, ed. Diane Owen Hughes and Thomas R. Trautmann (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1995), 139–66.

82 See Laurence Dickey, "Translatio Imperii and Translatio Religionis: The 'Geography of Salvation' in Russian and American Messianic Thinking," in *The Cultural Gradient: The Transmission of Ideas in Europe, 1789–1991*, ed. Catherine Evtuhov and Stephen Kotkin (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002), 13–32.

83 Adrian Streete, *Apocalypse and Anti-Catholicism in Seventeenth-Century English Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 34.

In that sense, early Protestants drew from the reform and apocalyptic movements of the Mediaeval period.⁸⁴ They also returned to ancient sources like Daniel, but cast a wary eye at more traditional modes of interpretation. In terms of political sovereignty, early Protestant interpreters rejected the idea that the four kingdoms formed a continuous, unbroken line that ends by affirming the current local monarch.⁸⁵ Instead, they argued that the four kingdoms represented the awful tyranny of ungodly *imperium*, and these kingdoms were to be resisted and rejected in favor of a new kind of sovereign—namely Protestant magistrates, who were understood as harbingers of the fifth righteous kingdom.⁸⁶ The Reformers' argument that all four kingdoms of Daniel represent evil opponents, embodied concretely by Papal Rome and the invading Turks, is adumbrated by the Strasbourg Astronomical clock.⁸⁷ The four kingdoms surrounded a calendar that began at the presumed date of creation and was reset every year so that it always projected a century into the future; this calendar also marked days of the week, the month, and feast days. Thus, the mechanical time of merchants, the bureaucratic time of the local state, the legitimating time of imperial monarchs, the cosmic time of scientists, and the eschatological time of salvation history are interlinked in the complex semiotic networks of the Strasbourg clock. In short, it was a machine built to produce the chronosophy of the Early Modern world.

The Strasbourg clock quickly grew famous throughout Europe, and was celebrated in widely circulated woodcuts by Tobias Stimmer, who designed and executed the paintings that adorned the clock itself. The woodcuts featured a poem written by the famous poet Philip Nicodemus Frischlin praising the clock, God's work in salvation history, and Dasypodius's scientific genius, all dedicated to the magistrates and senate of Strasbourg.⁸⁸

84 On reform and biblical apocalypticism, see Matthew Gabriele, "This Time, Maybe This Time: Biblical Commentary, Monastic Historiography, and Lost Cause-ism at the Turn of the First Millennium," in *Apocalypse and Reform from Late Antiquity to the Middle Ages*, ed. Matthew Gabriele and James T. Palmer (London: Routledge, 2019), 183–204.

85 Euan Cameron, "Cosmic Time and the Theological View of World History," *ITQ* 77 (2012): 349–64.

86 See Ernst Breisach, *Historiography: Ancient, Medieval, and Modern*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 163.

87 See Heinrich Bornkamm, *Luther and the Old Testament*, trans. Eric W. and Ruth C. Gritsch (Mifflintown, PA: Sigler Press, 1997), 68.

88 F. C. Haber, "The Cathedral Clock and the Cosmological Clock Metaphor," in *The Study of Time II: Proceedings of the Second Conference of the International Society for the Study of Time, Late Yamanaka-Japan*, ed. J. T. Fraser and N. Lawrence (Springer: New York, 1975), 409.

In the same year that the clock was completed, a second apocalyptic vision attributed to the pseudonymous Wilhelm Friess, but likely written by the well-known Strasbourg-based printer, Johann Fischart, appeared.⁸⁹ Friess's first vision, published in Antwerp in the 1550s during the wars of religion, was pro-Protestant propaganda set within the frame of eschatological, quasi-scientific astrology; this propaganda was so powerful that two printers responsible for disseminating it were executed.⁹⁰ After Friess's reported death, many new prophecies written in his name began to be published throughout the continent. By 1574, when a major new prophecy attributed to Friess emerged in Calvinist Strasbourg, the astronomical clock had primed the citizenry for a new round of astronomical prophecy. As Jonathan Green explains, the Friess prophecy of 1574 presents a nightmare vision of demonic armies invading Germany from all sides. Previous visions attributed to Friess also described an invasion of Protestant lands. In the 1574 version, however, the prophecy depicts "an invasion approaching from four directions," corresponding to the four empires depicted on the Strasbourg astronomical clock—which was the source for the astrological knowledge in the text.⁹¹ The concern with invading armies was not fictional, either: the newly crowned Henry III of France terrified the Alsatian Calvinists. Thus, the Friess prophecy of 1574 "can be seen as an apocalyptic ekphrasis inspired by the astronomical clock in Strasbourg."⁹² In its far-reaching influence and its ability to combine the political, scientific, and apocalyptic, Dasypodius's timepiece reveals something of the distinctive Early Modern politics of time.

There are other examples of very different uses of the four kingdoms even in Protestant Germany—the Lüneberger Spiegel of 1587, for example, that Sophie of Brandenburg gave to her son, Christian II, on the eve of his accession to elector, or the early seventeenth century western facade of the Nuremberg Rathaus, which reimagined the history of sovereignty eventuating not in a royal palace, but in a city hall that emphasized the local self-determination of a free city.⁹³ Several revolutionaries in the Early Modern period, such as the Fifth Monarchy Men in England or Thomas Müntzer in Germany, draw upon the four kingdom schema to represent a new conception of time: namely, the

89 Jonathan Green, *The Strange and Terrible Visions of Wilhelm Friess: The Paths of Prophecy in Reformation Europe* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2014), 107–109.

90 Green, *Strange and Terrible Visions*, 1–35.

91 Green, *Strange and Terrible Visions*, 77, 109.

92 Green, *Strange and Terrible Visions*, 109.

93 See Hans Schröder, *Dirch Utermarke ein Hamburger Goldschmied der Renaissance* (Hamburg: Museum für Hamburgische Geschichte, 1939), 100–102; Ernst Mummenhoff, *Das Rathaus in Nürnberg* (Nürnberg: J. H. Schrag, 1891), 133–38.

radical interruption that rejected sovereign control over time in an attempt to create the possibility of a new order.⁹⁴ It is not a surprise that they emphasize the breaking of the statue and the discontinuous eruption of a kingdom of the righteous. Thomas Müntzer in particular attacked the princes of Saxony with a schema that they interpreted in a very different way: to Müntzer, the princes were the weak and broken clay toes, unable to defend themselves against the stone's impending strike.⁹⁵ These re-imaginings of the four kingdoms schema, and many others, were made possible by the cultural, political and theological ruptures of the Early Modern period.

5 Conclusion: The Four Kingdoms in Enlightenment and Post-Enlightenment Thought

While space-time precludes me from pursuing this historical investigation much further, I will conclude by noting that the Enlightenment introduced another epistemic, political and theological shift that opened room for still more interpretations of the four kingdoms schema, while foreclosing others. Perhaps the dominant image of the concept of time in the transition to the Enlightenment is the work of scientific historiography that attempts to understand the past dispassionately and represent it as it "actually was."

The French Encyclopedia, published between 1751 and 1772 by Diderot and d'Alembert, attempted to synthesize all the production of knowledge of the past and present. Jacques Le Goff sees this event as so important that it marks the final transition away from the mediaeval world, and thus "the end of one period and the beginning of another."⁹⁶ Yet, as Le Goff points out, scholars embodying the principles of the Enlightenment still draw upon the four kingdoms schema even after it had been decisively attacked by Jean Bodin, among others.⁹⁷

94 Thomas Rahn, "Geschichte gedächtnis am Körper: Fürstliche merkund Mediationsbilder nach Weltreiche Prophetie des zweite Buches Daniel," in *Seelenmaschinen: Gattungstraditionen, Funktionen und Leistungsgrenzen der Mnemotechniken vom späten Mittelalter bis zum Beginn der Moderne*, ed. Jorg Jochen Berns and Wolfgang Neuber (Vienna: Böhlau Verlag, 2000), 521–61; Oliver Cromwell, *Speeches of Oliver Cromwell, 1644–1658*, ed. Charles Stainer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1901), 113–14.

95 Thomas Müntzer, *Revelation and Revolution: Basic Writings of Thomas Müntzer*, ed. and trans. M. Baylor (Cranbury: Associated University Presses, 1993), 108–109.

96 Le Goff, *Must We Divide History*, 89.

97 See Cameron, "Cosmic Time" and Jean Bodin, *Methodus ad facile historiarum cognitionem* (Heidelberg: Heredes Ionannis Mareschalli Lugdunensis, 1591), 416–33.

Even Voltaire used a fourfold division of time in his *Le siècle de Louis XIV* (1751). He wrote, seemingly unironically, “whosoever has taste, will find but four ages in the history of the world.”⁹⁸ For Voltaire, these four ages coincide with peaks of human achievement: first in ancient Greece, then Caesar in Rome, then the Renaissance, and then, last but certainly not least, Louis XIV. Perhaps Voltaire rejected all kinds of superstitions of the past, but he could not escape the political legitimation of *translatio imperii et studii*. Hegel could not escape it, either, as he divided history into four empires: Oriental, Greek, Roman and Germanic. Even Foucault, who named three crucial ages in history: the Renaissance, the age of Reason from Descartes to Revolution, then historicist scholarship of the twentieth century, and then added a fourth and golden era, “a future, starting now,” of discursive analysis.⁹⁹ Perhaps these enlightened scholars drew upon the schema for two interlinked reasons: first, articulation must precede any analysis, and second, any attempt to synthesize history requires the use or creation of a meaningful chronosophy. Meaning does not reside in pure objective fact: it is the result of a hermeneutic, and it must draw on pre-existent cultural reservoirs, at least to some degree, to make sense. Doubtless, much more work is required to explore more carefully how the epistemic, political and theological ruptures at the boundaries of historical periods lead to re-interpretation and redeployment of the four kingdoms schema. But that will have to wait for another day.

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98 See Le Goff, *Must We Divide History*, 11.

99 See John Urquhart, “Daniel and Hegel: History and Prophecy,” *The Christian Monthly and Family Treasury* (London: T. Nelson and Sons, 1881), 556–61; and Ian Hacking, *Historical Ontology* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002), 77–78.

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